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ABSTRACT

This text describes how human service personnel can best determine the desires of consumers with disabilities and how human service agencies can provide optimal support. This book is a synthesis of knowledge about the outcomes of the lives of people with disabilities and how human service agencies operate. While the first area of concentration is about support for people with disabilities, the second focus is on the application of outcome management and ways to maximize the effectiveness of human service agencies. The book is organized into four sections. The first section is an overview of what constitutes person-centered planning and outcome management (chapters 2 and 3). The second section (chapters 4-11) is a detailed description of how the values, processes, and strategies of person-centered planning and outcome management are used collaboratively to maximize effectiveness, including step-by-step procedures for designing, managing and operating human-service agencies. The third section (chapter 12) provides a summary discussion of some of the most frequently encountered obstacles to managing human services. The fourth and final section includes an appendix of an instrument that can be applied in agencies to assess and improve operational success. Within each chapter, methods of providing support and services are described in day-to-day matters. The successes and common obstacles are discussed within each type of case illustration. Using examples of individuals with disabilities and their families, person-centered planning has been applied to relevant case studies. (Contains 53 references.) (CR)

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PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING AND OUTCOME MANAGEMENT

Maximizing Organizational Effectiveness in Supporting Quality Lifestyles Among People With Disabilities

Jane M. Everson and Dennis H. Reid

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Maximizing Organizational Effectiveness in Supporting Quality Lifestyles Among People With Disabilities

Jane M. Everson and Dennis H. Reid

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to those human service personnel, family members and self-advocates who continuously strive to support people with disabilities in experiencing enjoyable and valued lives.

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Chapter 1

New Directions in Supporting Quality Lifestyles Among People With Disabilities

Tremendous changes in outcomes for people with disabilities and their families have occurred over the past 20 years. Nationally, nearly five and a half million children receive special education services. A growing number of these students are educated in their neighborhood schools in inclusive settings. Nearly 150,000 adults with disabilities are competitively employed as a result of supported employment services. These individuals are earning wages and contributing to the nation's workforce in ways unimaginable even two decades ago. Supported living has enabled many thousands of individuals with disabilities to live in homes and apartments in communities of their choosing. For many of these individuals, home ownership is rapidly becoming a reality. Today, federal legislation addressing education and rehabilitation services requires active family and consumer participation in all aspects of service planning and decision-making. For the first time in history, individuals with disabilities and their families are partnering with professionals in planning, delivering and evaluating the services and supports they want and need.

For many managers and staff in human service agencies, these new service directions are exciting. However, frustration often accompanies the excitement. The frustration arises because the new directions raise numerous questions and require human service personnel to overcome many obstacles. While it is true that people with disabilities are present and participating in their communities in larger numbers than any other time in history, unfortunately there are still many more people who are waiting for services and/or who are dissatisfied with the outcomes they are attaining. As more individuals with disabilities begin to explore the new service options and as more human service staff confront the systemic realities of their agencies and organizations, people are becoming frustrated by programs that do not match an individual's wants and needs, by services that are not truly individualized, and by systems that seem more concerned with regulations and policies than with people.

How can agencies be changed and managed to provide the serv-

ices and supports necessary so that people with disabilities can fully realize quality lifestyles? The answers to this and related questions are often complex and unclear. New service directions demand new ways of thinking about, communicating with, assessing, planning for, and supporting people with disabilities. The changes in providing supports require new ways of marketing services, and of reaching out to individuals with disabilities, their families and community members. New service directions likewise demand new ways of defining staff roles and of providing staff training, as well as new ways of conducting intakes and assessments, and getting to know consumers who have disabilities. New ways of developing and implementing service plans with consumers are required, as are means for monitoring and evaluating consumer outcomes. The new service directions also frequently involve new ways of managing fiscal and other resources. In short, these new service directions demand new ways of providing supports for individuals with disabilities and new ways of managing agencies and organizations.

Although the process involved in changing how supports and services are provided in order to ensure the best quality of life for people with disabilities is both multifaceted and complex, there are two procedural components that form the basis of the entire process. First, outcomes that represent the most important dreams and desires of individuals with disabilities and their families must be accurately identified within human service agencies. Second, the supports and services necessary for the individuals and their families to attain their desired outcomes must be determined and then provided consistently and proficiently by personnel within the agencies.

Purpose of *Person-Centered Planning and Outcome Management*

The purpose of this text is to describe how human service personnel can best determine the dreams and desires of consumers with disabilities and their families, and how human service agencies can provide supports and services in a manner that maximizes attainment of those dreams and desires. The content of the book represents a synthesis of current knowledge about valued outcomes in the lives of people with disabilities and how human service agencies must operate in order to ensure that those outcomes are maximally attained.

The essence of operating a person-centered human service agency involves first determining consumer dreams and desires, and then providing agency supports and services in a manner that results in consumers realizing those dreams and desires

In accordance with the just-stated purpose, the focus throughout the following chapters is on two recent directions pertaining to supports and services for people with developmental and related disabilities. First, how *person-centered planning* can be used to support people with disabilities and their families in leading desired, valued lives will be described. Second, the application of *outcome management* for maximizing the effectiveness of human service agencies in providing the highest quality supports and services will be discussed in-depth. On a basic level, these two developments correspond with the two respective parts of the text's purpose. However, it will also be shown that to provide the best possible supports and services for consumers of human services, these two approaches must be carefully interwoven within the routine management and operation of human service agencies.

Organization of *Person-Centered Planning and Outcome Management*

This book is organized into four sections. First, in the subsequent two chapters (**Chapters 2 and 3**), an overview of what constitutes person-centered planning and outcome management will be presented, respectively. In the second section (**Chapters 4 - 11**), a detailed description will be provided regarding how the values, processes and strategies of person-centered planning and outcome management can be used collaboratively to maximize the effectiveness of human service agencies in identifying and attaining desired consumer outcomes. This section provides step-by-step procedures for designing, managing and operating human service agencies in a truly person-centered manner. The third section of the text, **Chapter 12**, provides a summary discussion of some of the most frequently encountered obstacles to managing human services in a person-centered manner, and how those obstacles can be overcome.

Within each of the chapters of *Person-Centered Planning and Outcome Management*, methods of providing person-centered sup-

ports and services will be described in light of the day-to-day, practical realities of attempting to manage and operate human service agencies in a quality manner. Where relevant, case illustrations in which person-centered planning has been applied with individuals who have disabilities and their families will be presented. Likewise, case illustrations involving attempts to move entire human service agencies to a more person-centered way of doing business will be provided. Within each type of case illustration the successes and common obstacles to enhancing quality lifestyles among people with disabilities through person-centered planning in human service agencies will be described.

The fourth and final section of ***Person-Centered Planning and Outcome Management*** includes an **Appendix** of an instrument that readers can apply within their own agencies to assess and improve the person-centeredness and operational success in achieving individually desired outcomes for agency consumers. The fourth section also includes **Selected Readings** for readers who are interested in obtaining additional information regarding specific aspects of person-centered planning and outcome management. The **Selected Readings** also provide references to the applied research along with individual and agency case illustrations upon which much of the content of this book is based.

Although the organization of this text and its constituent chapters generally coincides with specific strategies and procedures comprising person-centered planning and outcome management, it should be noted that no single chapter is intended to be considered in isolation. As indicated earlier, to successfully operate human service agencies in a person-centered manner, aspects of person-centered planning and outcome management must be carefully interwoven. Information provided in various chapters builds on information discussed in other chapters. Hence, the text should be considered in its entirety to obtain and appreciate the full essence of how person-centered planning and outcome management can help human service agencies maximize the degree to which agency consumers achieve the lifestyles they and their families desire.

To exemplify how person-centered planning and outcome management can be interwoven, three case illustrations are introduced in **Chapter 2**. The case illustrations are then continued and expanded upon in subsequent chapters. The case illustrations demonstrate how

person-centered planning and outcome management, when applied collaboratively, can be used to assist persons with various types of disabilities in achieving desired and valued lifestyles.

Intended Audience of *Person-Centered Planning and Outcome Management*

Person-Centered Planning and Outcome Management is directed to anyone involved in, or interested in, the provision of supports and services for people with developmental and related disabilities. The content is based on applied research and the authors' experiences in the full continuum of human service settings, including residential, educational, habilitative, vocational, recreational and case-management agencies.

Although most aspects of the text should be of relevance to the entire range of professional and paraprofessional personnel in the human services, *Person-Centered Planning and Outcome Management* is particularly directed to three specific groups of human service personnel. First, the content should be most relevant to executive, managerial and supervisory personnel who are responsible for designing service provision and supervising the implementation of services by direct support personnel. Second, the text should apply directly to clinical and professional personnel who participate in the design, implementation and/or supervision of supports in human service agencies. Third, academicians and training personnel who teach others about the human services should find the text of immediate relevance.

A final, and most important, group of intended readers of *Person-Centered Planning and Outcome Management* is family members of people with disabilities and in some cases, people with disabilities themselves. For the latter readership, the book is intended as a description of what to expect and advocate for in regard to quality supports and services provided by respective human service agencies.

Chapter 2

Person-Centered Planning: Supporting People in New and Different Ways

A widespread desire to improve the manner in which supports and services are provided by human service agencies for people with disabilities has lead to the recent development of a number of new consumer assessment and planning approaches. The approaches represent major changes relative to traditional models typically used in human service agencies. *Person-centered* is the term used to describe several of the more popular models. Essential Lifestyle Planning, Group Action Planning, Individual Service Design, Lifestyle Planning, MAPS, PATH, and Personal Futures Planning are examples of some of the most common person-centered planning models. However, there are also many lesser known models (see **Selected Readings** section on **Person-Centered Models and Approaches** for additional information).

What is person-centered planning? What are the values common to all person-centered models? What tools and strategies are associated with person-centered models? And what are the management implications for agencies and organizations that adopt these approaches? These are the questions that will be answered in this chapter.

What is Person-Centered Planning?

Person-centered planning describes a number of value-based approaches for thinking about, communicating with, assessing, planning for, and supporting people with disabilities. Most person-centered planning models offer assessment and planning tools along with strategies for designing and implementing service plans. Thus, person-centered applies to both the form and content of assessment and planning as well as to the strategies used to implement service plans.

Person-centered approaches are generally contrasted with more traditional systems-centered models. Systems-centered approaches use assessment and planning tools to match individuals to services and supports typically offered by a respective human service agency. Professionals control intake, assessment, service delivery and evaluation activities. Service availability is dictated by funding structures and investments in buildings. In essence, the emphasis is on changing the

person with a disability so that the individual fits into a given environment. Service options are dictated by disability labels and standardized test scores. Although traditional systems-centered approaches generally provide some degree of choice and individualization in services, the options are typically limited to the array of services and supports currently provided by the agency, by professional staff certifications, and by funding sources.

As an alternative to systems-centered models to providing supports and services for people with disabilities, person-centered approaches focus attention on the unique and specific wants and needs of an individual. The tools and strategies associated with person-centered approaches encourage support personnel and family members to think about people first and systems second. The wants, needs and dreams of an individual define the scope of services and supports provided to the individual. When an agency adopts a person-centered approach, if the agency cannot actively support a consumer's dreams or provide the services or supports needed and desired by the consumer, the service planning team must choose either to create the supports within the agency or refer the individual to another agency.

In a truly person-centered environment, individuals with disabilities and their families are the most important players in the decision-making process. If they are not satisfied with the services and supports offered by an agency, they may use individualized budgets and flexible funding structures to purchase desired services and supports from other available agencies.

Person-centered planning describes a number of value-based approaches for thinking about, communicating with, assessing, planning for, and supporting people with disabilities. The term *person-centered* applies to both the form and content of assessment and planning activities, as well as to strategies used to implement service plans

As just indicated, person-centered approaches are much more than just assessment and planning packages for individuals. As will be discussed throughout this book, successful person-centered approaches also involve outcome management procedures and systems change strategies. In stark contrast to most approaches for planning and providing supports and services for people with disabilities though, person-centered models impact systems change *one person at*

a time. Person-centered practices challenge human service personnel to design, evaluate and change agencies in response to the lessons learned from supporting individual consumers in new and different ways. How person-centered planning compares to, and differs from, traditional service planning and provision is illustrated below.

How Traditional Service Planning and Person-Centered Planning Compare and Contrast

Traditional Service Planning	Person-Centered Planning
A multi-disciplinary team of service providers meets annually with the individual/family to develop a plan for services	A support team of the individual, family, friends, service providers, and community members meets regularly/frequently to develop and implement a future vision plan for the individual
The team conducts/interprets assessment data using standardized/non-standardized assessment mechanisms	The support team gathers, organizes, and manages assessment information into a personal profile using highly-visual/team-based methods
The individual/family are invited to attend/participate in the team meeting as appropriate	The support team actively defines roles for the individual/family to play and assists them in assuming these roles in a respected and competent manner
Regulations and mandates guide the development/implementation of the plan	A future vision or other document of desired future dreams, fears, and plans drives the support team's activities
Based upon assessment data, the plan emphasizes goals/objectives to be met by the individual	The document emphasizes goals and actions to be undertaken by all team members to change environments, services and supports
The plan is monitored/evaluated by the team/regulatory agencies	Evaluation/implementation of the plan is dependent upon the commitment/energy of the support team as well as the monitoring and evaluation of the agency

A Person-Centered Value Base

The goal of all person-centered approaches is to learn about people with disabilities in more effective and efficient ways in order to plan and create supports that can assist individuals in experiencing participative and self-directed lives in local communities. To accomplish this goal, all person-centered approaches share some common values or beliefs. Each of these values is discussed in more detail in the following pages.

Person-Centered Approaches are Driven by the Individual, Family and Friends

Person-centered approaches place the individual with a disability in the driver's seat. That is, person-centered models encourage agencies and service teams to define an active, participative role for the consumer with a disability, the consumer's family and friends. Person-centered models provide tools and strategies for supporting the individual and family in assuming a leadership role in assessment and planning activities.

When person-centered tools and strategies are used effectively, consumers and their families assist service teams in setting the direction and goals of meetings. The approaches also help identify strategies to guide service teams and families in assisting consumers in achieving their dreams. As a result, the planning goals and strategies are determined by the dreams, wants and needs of individuals with disabilities and their families and not by available service options.

Person-Centered Approaches Focus on Gifts and Capacities

Person-centered approaches use a variety of tools and strategies to heighten awareness that people with disabilities are unique, with individual personalities, hopes and dreams, and support needs. All person-centered approaches encourage service teams and families to direct assessment and planning activities around a consumer's gifts and capacities instead of around disabilities or deficits. Thus, specific assessment tools and strategies are suggested for uncovering each consumer's gifts and capacities — as well as support needs. Information resulting from person-centered assessment procedures is then used to create service plans that build upon a consumer's gifts and capacities. For most service teams and families, this is a new way of thinking about assessment.

Person-Centered Approaches are Visionary and Future-Oriented

Person-centered approaches encourage service teams and families to look toward the future and to think about the future in an optimistic and visionary manner. Through capacity-building assessment activities, service teams become aware of a consumer's hopes, dreams, gifts and capacities. This assessment information serves as a foundation for visionary and future-oriented service planning. Person-centered approaches offer service teams and families tools and strategies that help them identify and, as needed, design future-oriented services and supports that match the consumer's wants, needs and dreams.

Person-Centered Approaches Depend Upon Community Membership and Commitment

Person-centered approaches view service providers as only one necessary part of the support team for assisting individuals with disabilities and their families in reaching their dreams. In addition to human service personnel, person-centered approaches value community involvement in all phases of service planning and delivery. Community members who know the consumer with a disability are invited to participate in the assessment process to help the service team become better acquainted with the consumer. Community members who are involved in the consumer's life or who are identified as potential future supports for the consumer are invited to participate in the planning process to help identify and build the consumer's community presence and participation.

Person-centered approaches offer specific tools and strategies to build community membership. Tools and strategies are also provided for building commitment to a consumer's dreams. Anyone who has a connection to the individual with a disability and his or her family can be a potential resource in accomplishing a service plan, and ultimately the individual's future dreams.

Person-Centered Approaches Emphasize Supports and Connections Over Services

By building community membership and commitment, person-centered approaches emphasize supports and connections in contrast to relying exclusively on programs and services. The emphasis on supports and connections does not diminish the need for programs

and services, nor does it diminish the need for service providers or professionals. However, such an emphasis does encourage human service agencies to seek new and different resources to support a consumer's presence and participation in the community. *Natural supports* — those people and generic resources that the general populace uses on a routine basis as part of living, working and recreating in local communities — become critical in attaining person-centered planning outcomes. As with other aspects of person-centered planning, emphasizing natural supports is a new way of thinking about service planning for most service teams and families.

Person-centered approaches offer service teams and families tools and strategies for identifying and using natural supports to supplement specialized services (e.g., physical therapy, behavior analysis, assistive technology) offered by human service agencies. This does not mean that specialized services will not be necessary for some consumers, but simply that most consumers will also benefit from working in partnership with employers, neighbors, church members and other community persons to attain desired outcomes. In addition, the need for specialized services is not considered a barrier to participation in community-inclusive opportunities. Instead, the role of specialists is to engineer changes in environments and apply the supports needed to ensure success in those environments.

Person-Centered Approaches Enable Individualized Plans to be Developed

As noted thus far, person-centered approaches seek to build environments, services and supports that are individualized and responsive to each person's wants, needs and dreams. By placing individuals with disabilities and their families in the driver's seat, by using capacity-building assessment activities, and by including community connections and supports, person-centered approaches lay a foundation for truly individualized service planning. Person-centered approaches also provide a variety of tools and strategies to guide the monitoring and evaluation of person-centered planning activities to ensure that individualized plans are implemented and in turn, outcomes are achieved in a successful and desired manner.

Person-Centered Approaches Change Services to be More Responsive to Consumers

Because person-centered approaches assist individuals with disabilities and their families in reaching their personal dreams, these approaches challenge agencies to assess and change existing environments, services and supports, and as needed, to design new ones. By its very nature, person-centered planning requires agencies to change on a one-consumer-at-a-time basis. Due to the focus on each consumer as a unique person with individualized dreams and desires, agencies that embrace person-centered approaches often become frustrated with the time and resources necessary to accomplish person-centered planning and outcomes. Human service personnel frequently wonder how person-centered planning can realistically be accomplished with a focus on one consumer at a time. Relatedly, questions arise regarding how person-centered planning and outcomes can be accomplished for everyone served by the agency. The answers to these questions lie in another question: How can agencies be changed and operated in response to the lessons learned from supporting consumers in new and different ways? These are the questions to be addressed throughout this book through exploration of an outcome management approach that is grounded in person-centered values and practices.

Core Values of Person-Centered Planning Models

• Driven by the Individual, Family, and Friends
• Focus on an Individual's Gifts and Capacities
• Visionary and Future-Oriented
• Dependent Upon Community Membership and Commitment
• Emphasize Supports and Connections Over Services
• Enable Individualized Plans to be Developed
• Change Services to be More Responsive to Consumers

Case Study #1: Bloomfield

Bloomfield is a public residential facility housed in a rural community in a western state. Bloomfield provides residential services to 189 adults with severe to profound mental retardation and multiple disabilities. Bloomfield's campus provides a setting of four-bedroom housing units where each Bloomfield resident lives with seven other individuals with similar disabilities and support needs. Each unit is staffed by a house parent and 4-5 day and evening shift direct support workers. The Bloomfield campus includes a vocational center where residents learn vocational tasks and earn piece-rate for work contracted with local community businesses. The campus also provides a recreation center and a cafeteria. The Director of Bloomfield has been hearing a lot about person-centered planning from her state's mental retardation agency and has decided she would like to learn more about how it might work for Bloomfield's residents and staff. She identified a consultant from a nearby university, Ms. Pikes, to train Bloomfield's staff and demonstrate how Bloomfield might adopt person-centered planning to enhance its residential services.

What Are the Tools and Strategies Associated With Person-Centered Approaches?

In order to operate human service agencies in a person-centered manner, support personnel must be knowledgeable about, and skilled in, the tools and strategies of person-centered planning. When used together and effectively, the tools and strategies of person-centered planning can create new outcomes for individuals with disabilities and their families.

To understand the variety of tools and strategies used in person-centered planning, it is helpful to picture a large toolbox. Within the toolbox, there are a number of oddly-shaped and unfamiliar tools. Each tool has a different purpose. Once human service personnel become familiar with each tool, it becomes apparent that many of the tools can be used in a variety of ways to accomplish specific tasks. In addition, many of the tools can be modified to meet personal needs and preferences, and to fit the settings and materials that are idiosyncratic to a given agency. However, when faced with an especially

complex and unfamiliar task, human service personnel must be competent in the use of many if not all of the tools and must be prepared to use all of the tools to accomplish the task.

At first, the tools and strategies of person-centered planning will seem odd and unfamiliar. Initially, human service staff are frequently uncomfortable using the tools and strategies and often will try to fit them into a model with which the personnel are more familiar and comfortable. As familiarity and experience with each individual tool increases though, staff usually develop an understanding of how the tools work together. Additionally, staff learn to modify many of the tools to suit their preferences and operational effectiveness.

The full power of person-centered planning will be realized only when person-centered tools are used effectively to bring about changes in an individual's life and ultimately, entire agencies

Three Basic Steps of Accomplishing a Person-Centered Approach

Generally, individual planning or support teams follow three steps to accomplish a person-centered approach. The steps are basic and fit within the traditional model understood by most human service personnel. The three steps are also grounded in the values discussed in this chapter, and facilitate use of the tools and strategies that make agencies and activities person-centered. First, teams conduct assessment activities. Second, teams develop service and support plans. Third, teams implement plans and evaluate resulting accomplishments. Within each step, there is an assortment of tools and strategies that support teams, and ultimately entire agencies, can use to make the transition from a systems-centered approach to a person-centered approach.

Step One: Using Support Teams to Conduct Assessment Activities. The goal of all person-centered assessment activities is to get to know individuals with disabilities as people with unique personalities, hopes, dreams and support needs. Person-centered assessment tools require an initial focus on abilities, and then a subsequent focus on support needs. The assessment tools remind support teams that each consumer has a lifetime of experiences, a network of people, and a set of preferences that make the consumer unique. The tools likewise remind teams that nearly everyone has dreams and fears and nearly every family has dreams and fears for their family members.

Effective use of person-centered assessment tools requires support teams to leave behind pre-conceived notions of disability labels and test scores. Only when it is certain that teams know a consumer well, can the teams go back and discuss support needs related to disability labels and test scores.

The crucial task in conducting person-centered assessment activities is to identify the appropriate individuals to come to the table as support team members. In traditional, systems-centered agencies and organizations, assessment activities are conducted by a multi-disciplinary or inter-disciplinary planning team. Individuals with disabilities and their families may be invited to attend these meetings, but they are seldom viewed as equal members of the team or as experts. Extended family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, church members and other people who serve as natural supports are almost never invited to participate. In contrast, person-centered support teams are made up of people who: 1) know the consumer well, 2) support or potentially can support the consumer, and 3) are chosen by the consumer and/or family to participate as team members. Thus, person-centered support teams are as likely to be made up of Qualified Mental Retardation Professionals (QMRPs) as they are restaurant co-workers, members of softball leagues, and real estate agents. Direct support staff, personal care attendants and peer tutors who interact daily with the consumer are as likely to be team members as are physical therapists who see the consumer weekly or itinerant vision teachers who see the individual monthly.

To help illustrate the important and unique role that the groups of people as just noted play in the life of an individual for whom a person-centered plan is to be developed, various person-centered planning models refer to the groups as *circles of support* or *circles of friends.* More simply, the groups may be referred to as person-centered *support teams.* To accomplish assessment activities, person-centered support teams may meet once, twice, quarterly, annually, or on some other as needed schedule. The tools and strategies used by the teams as well as the meeting schedule are dictated by the uniqueness of the consumer's desired outcomes and by the characteristics of the human service agencies targeted to serve and support the consumer. Ultimately, once the assessment phase is completed, all support team members have to make some hard decisions about the time, energy and other resources they are willing to contribute to assist the con-

sumer in attaining desired dreams.

Person-centered models offer support teams some unique assessment tools that assist the teams in thinking about and discovering the consumer's gifts, capacities and support needs. Group graphics, also known as *mapping*, is one of the most unique tools associated with many person-centered planning models. Mapping uses color, symbols, words and pictures to gather and record information about people. Information is collected using an interactive group process and recorded on large sheets of paper for the entire support team to view and discuss. Recent research has demonstrated that the group process can be a reliable and valid assessment approach that successfully includes consumers, families and support personnel in the assessment and planning procedures (see **Selected Readings** for additional information on the background research).

Each person-centered model suggests that a support team begin the assessment process by creating a set of maps, typically known as a *personal profile.* Suggested maps to include in a personal profile vary from model to model and by the preliminary goals, wants and needs of the individual (again, see **Selected Readings**, and particularly the section on **Person-Centered Models and Approaches**, for more detail on mapping tools). For example, the Individual Service Design model suggests focusing group graphics around three basic questions: 1) Who is the person? 2) What does the person need? and 3) What will need to happen to meet the person's needs? The Personal Futures Planning model suggests completing five assessment maps: 1) relationships, 2) places, 3) background, 4) personal preferences, and 5) dreams, hopes and fears. The dreams, hopes and fears map may alternatively be referred to as a future vision map. The Personal Futures Planning model also suggests that teams consider developing other optional maps such as a health map or communication map as needed. Expanding upon these basic frameworks, the Essential Lifestyle Planning approach includes a non-negotiable map, and *MAPS* includes a nightmare map. As teams become proficient in using mapping, the teams can choose the specific maps, or create their own maps, to include in a personal profile based upon the wants and needs of the consumers they serve and the type of services and supports they provide. Strategies for developing these and other maps will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters.

Together, the maps included in a personal profile provide the

support team with a more capacity-building, future-oriented and visionary picture of a consumer's support wants and needs than if the team relies solely on traditional assessment activities. However, use of maps in this manner does not mean that the team disregards traditional assessment tools and strategies. As will be seen in **Chapter 5**, once the team has laid the foundation for assessment with these person-centered tools, the team can then continue and complete the assessment process with additional information that may need to be supplied by traditional assessment tools.

Step Two: Using Support Teams to Develop Service Plans. Once assessment activities have been completed, the next step the support team must take is to develop a plan specifying the consumer's desired outcomes along with the services and supports necessary to attain the outcomes. Once again, mapping is an important tool. The development of a truly individualized service plan involves a dream, hopes and fears map, a future vision map or some similar picture of the individual's desired and needed outcomes as a foundation for the plan. These types of maps help move the support team beyond getting to know the individual and into defining the person's dreams or desired outcomes.

Once the support team has completed a personal profile and a future vision or dream map, the team is ready to develop a service plan for assisting the consumer in realizing the desired dreams. Service plans, whether represented by Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Individual Habilitation Plans (IHPs), active treatment plans or some other type of individualized plan, must be written in a person-centered manner. The plans must use the individual's dreams, hopes and preferences as the foundation for the identification of short- and long-term goals as well as for the provision of supports and services necessary to attain the goals. Developing service plans that are person-centered does not necessarily require an agency to revise old forms or develop new forms though, because the forms are less important than the assessment process used to gather the information and the manner in which goals and objectives are selected and written. The following table provides guidelines for developing service plans in a person-centered manner.

Guidelines for Developing Person-Centered Service Plans

- Create personal profiles and future vision or dream maps for consumers.
- Bring maps to service planning meetings and post them on the wall. Use the maps to open the meeting and ask the consumer and family to summarize the dreams, wants and needs.
- Encourage the consumer, family members and close friends to share their maps. Discuss themes, things that work well and things that do not work well.
- Discuss the consumer's dreams. What environments, services and supports are in place to support them? What gaps exist? What opportunities, experiences and environments does the consumer want and need in order to fulfill future dreams?
- Develop goals and objectives. Use the future vision or dream map as a checkpoint: Will the articulated goals move the consumer toward desired dreams? Will mastery of these goals assist the consumer in leading a more community-inclusive adult life? If the answer is no or if there is uncertainty, the team should discuss and possibly re-consider the goals.

By using the person-centered tools and strategies discussed to this point, as well as by following the just-noted guidelines, service plans can be developed with a true person-centered focus. To illustrate, the following table presents examples of several person-centered goals and objectives that emerged from a mapping process.

Examples of Person-Centered Goals and Objectives

Delinda and her team would like Delinda to live in an accessible apartment within the next two years with one other woman where she would be provided supports for meals, housekeeping and daily living care. Delinda has been living in her group home for several years and staff indicate that although she likes to spend time in the kitchen, she needs a lot of staff support to prepare meals. Because Delinda and her team want her to be more independent in her group home, by 10/99, she will be able to plan, shop for, and prepare one week of meals for two or three persons. She will be given a budget along with menu cards and modified recipes to prepare the meals. Delinda will be able to accomplish these tasks with less than 7 verbal and physical prompts per task.

Tyrone and his team would like Tyrone to be more physically active. Tyrone recently moved from a large residential center into a three-person group home and he spends a lot of his free time watching television and sleeping. His team would like Tyrone to experience a variety of activities that allow him to choose some preferred leisure options. By 11/99, Tyrone will be able to use photo activity cards to choose one of five leisure activities to participate in (e.g., walking at the park, swimming at the YMCA, playing softball with friends, bowling with a local league or riding a stationery bike), follow the steps necessary to organize the activity, and participate in the activity for 30 minutes with less than 5 verbal prompts.

The articulation of a consumer's dreams or desired outcomes requires important decisions on the part of an agency attempting to operate in a more person-centered manner. In particular, personnel must ask themselves, "Can we support this consumer's desired outcomes?", and more specifically, "Do we believe this individual can and should accomplish these outcomes and do we have or are we willing to develop the capacity necessary to support this individual's accomplishment of these outcomes?". These are pivotal questions for consumers, their families and agency personnel to consider. As consumers and their families become more knowledgeable of person-

centered values and practices, they will begin to approach agencies with their dreams already articulated. Funding mechanisms and policies will eventually enable consumers and their families to choose an agency to provide desired supports and services based upon an agency's affirmative responses to these types of questions. In turn, as agency personnel become more knowledgeable of person-centered values and practices, they will accept responsibility for the organizational changes necessary to support a consumer's desired outcomes or they must assume responsibility for referring the consumer to another, more appropriate agency.

Step Three: Using Action Planning and Other Meeting Effectiveness Skills to Implement and Evaluate Service Plans. Thinking about assessment in new and different ways and creating service plans with goals that reflect the dreams, wants and needs of consumers lay the foundation for agencies to function in a person-centered manner. However, these steps represent only one component of person-centered planning. Once service teams have developed personal profiles and written service plans for consumers, the teams are then ready to tackle the discussion, planning and systems change activities necessary to implement the plans in a truly person-centered manner. At this point most agencies will have a very clear idea of desired consumer outcomes — and most likely, a very unclear idea of how the agency can support consumers in attaining their desired outcomes.

Agencies that are sincerely invested in person-centered approaches must *actively* take on the challenging role of assisting consumers in reaching their dreams. Such roles will require the creation of new relationships with consumers and family members as well as new relationships with community members. This role will also require the revision of existing services and the creation of new service directions. Lastly, to be successful, the work will require an effective and coordinated working relationship among all agency personnel including executives, middle managers and direct support staff.

Evaluation of service plans is a familiar role to all agencies and organizations. Person-centered agencies expand this role to not only monitor and evaluate a consumer's attainment of desired outcomes, but also a consumer's satisfaction with the supports and services received by the agency or organization. In addition, person-centered

agencies and organizations self-assess their ability to assist consumers in attaining their dreams in a person-centered manner and use all of these data to maintain, modify and expand supports and services as necessary.

A skilled facilitator is an important variable in the person-centered planning process (see **Chapters 4** and **5** for further discussion of the roles and responsibilities of a person-centered planning facilitator). One critical role of the person-centered facilitator is the development of effective teams and the use of effective meeting skills. The team process is an important resource for support teams to use in assisting individuals in attaining their dreams. There are a number of processes associated with teaming models that have been incorporated within person-centered planning approaches to enhance the effectiveness of teams. The following table summarizes some of the most essential characteristics of effective support teams and effective team meeting procedures.

Person-Centered Teaming and Meeting Effectiveness Characteristics

- Teams are guided by the consumer's future vision and desired outcomes and team members work interdependently to achieve the outcomes.
- Teams meet frequently and regularly and use an action planning process to monitor and evaluate progress toward the consumer's vision and outcomes.
- Teams engage in effective face-to-face communication and have strategies in place to manage conflict among team members.
- Teams develop mechanisms for determining who is and who is not a member, roles for members, and ground rules to regulate behavior.

Case Study #2: Working Concepts

Working Concepts is a vocational program located in a suburban community in a southern state. Working Concepts provides services to approximately 128 adults with a range of disabilities. Most of the agency's clients are employed in individual jobs in community businesses where they are provided job coach supports. Some work part-time in the community through mobile work crews that contract with local businesses to bring employees with disabilities to work sites to accomplish janitorial or horticultural services. A very small number of clients work only within the program's sheltered workshop where they complete assembly and mailing tasks. The Director of Working Concepts, Mr. Millington, recently attended a statewide conference on employment for individuals with disabilities sponsored by the state's Department of Mental Retardation where he participated in a session on person-centered planning. He volunteered his agency to work with the state's Department of Mental Retardation to serve as a pilot site for using person-centered planning to enhance vocational services. The Department will provide each pilot site with a start-up grant of $5,000 and a series of inservice training sessions and follow-up technical assistance from a nationally-recognized consultant.

What Are the Management Implications for Agencies And Organizations of Adopting Person-Centered Approaches?

As discussed throughout this chapter, *person-centered* describes a number of approaches that assist teams in getting to know individuals in new and different ways in order to plan environments, services and supports necessary to assist individuals attain their dreams and desired outcomes. The most compelling reasons for adopting a person-centered planning approach come from the individuals and families of individuals whose lives have been changed through participation in the process. Over and over, people with disabilities and their families have reported that dreams have been realized — dreams of attending neighborhood schools, gaining employment leading toward a desired career path, purchasing homes and making

new friends, to name a few. In these cases, the agencies most invested in person-centered values and practices have embraced their successes and used the successes to make systems more responsive to the dreams and needs of all of the agency's consumers. In many more cases though, organizational problems have prohibited person-centered planning from assisting all consumers in realizing their dreams, desires and outcomes. Three problems in organizational functioning have been most pervasive in this regard.

The first organizational problem occurs when agencies provide staff preparation and development activities focusing on person-centered planning but do not support changes in staff performance and environmental working conditions. Sustained commitment to new responsibilities is perhaps the most difficult task of person-centered planning activities. Unless long-term commitment to fulfilling new work responsibilities occurs, there is little likelihood of person-centered plans being implemented in a manner that effectively supports all consumers in attaining their desired goals.

The second organizational problem occurs when an agency attempts to streamline or standardize a person-centered planning approach so that the approach will fit the agency's existing way of doing business. In this situation, an agency adopts the language and some of the tools discussed in this chapter but still maintains an overall, systems-centered approach to doing business. For example, consumers are invited to share their dreams in personal profiles, teams are renamed as circles of support, and mapping is used as an assessment tool, but the subsequent changes in how staff function on a daily basis to follow through in attaining the identified consumer outcomes do not occur. Flexible resources must be made available, and services and regulations must be changed to individually support each consumer. Otherwise, an agency is doing nothing more than adopting the vocabulary and some techniques of person-centered planning while still remaining tied to a systems-centered way of doing business.

The third, and related, organizational problem that frequently impedes person-centered planning occurs when planning teams attempt to conduct person-centered planning activities in isolation from an agency. That is, teams develop person-centered plans without changing the organizational structures and processes that have inhibited a consumer from attaining his or her dreams in the first

place. Teams may choose this approach because, at first glance, it appears easier than changing the agency and its systems. However, very few people with disabilities can accomplish all of their dreams without some assistance from human service agencies. The challenge and power of person-centered planning is to nurture effective leadership, pursue strategic planning, identify and overcome systemic barriers, and identify and strengthen agency incentives so that person-centered planning can become the norm for all of an agency's consumers.

The complex tasks associated with designing, evaluating and changing agencies and organizations from systems-centered to person-centered require attention to: 1) the identification of desired and new consumer and agency outcomes, 2) the identification of new staff roles and responsibilities, 3) the development of new ways of monitoring and evaluating consumer and agency outcomes, and 4) new ways of funding and fiscal management. Unless an agency makes a committed, strategic and long-range decision to tackle all of the complex tasks necessary to fully embrace the values of person-centered approaches, the agency is simply offering the same old services repackaged with new names, new staff titles and new forms.

Methods for assisting personnel in human service agencies in overcoming problems associated with operating in a person-centered manner are discussed in the remainder of this book. All of the methods relate to the successful implementation of an outcome management approach to operating human service agencies that value person-centeredness.

The complex tasks associated with designing, evaluating and changing agencies and organizations from systems-centered to person-centered require attention to: 1) the identification of desired and new consumer and agency outcomes, 2) the identification of new staff roles and responsibilities, 3) the development of new ways of monitoring and evaluating consumer and agency outcomes, and 4) new ways of funding and fiscal management

In order to set the occasion for a respective human service agency to operate in a person-centered manner, the **Appendix** to this book provides an assessment tool that many agency staff have found useful

in self-assessing the extent to which their agency currently does business in a person-centered format. This tool should be completed by various stakeholders in an agency, including management and administrative staff, clinical and professional personnel, direct support staff, consumers and family members of consumers. The assessment instrument asks agencies to self-assess their policies and practices across four service areas: 1) referral and intake, 2) assessment and evaluation, 3) service plan development, and 4) service plan implementation. The compiled results of the self-assessment can offer agency personnel and other stakeholders a starting point for discussion and planning as they work their way through this book. As discussed in subsequent chapters of this text, results of the self-assessment can also provide steering committees with guidance in the development of a strategic, outcome management plan designed to bring about a more person-centered way of doing business.

Case Study #3: Independence County

Independence County is a suburb of a major metropolitan city in a mid-western state. Independence County uses county and state tax revenues to fund county-wide developmental disabilities and mental health services. These services are overseen by a Director of Developmental Disabilities and a Director of Mental Health Services. The county employs 58 personnel and contracts for services from 21 agencies. These personnel provide and oversee in-home family support services, case management services, mental health counseling services, Medicaid waiver services, and an array of vocational and residential services. The Director of Developmental Disabilities Services recently attended a national conference of disability service providers and advocates where she learned about person-centered planning. When she returned to work, she shared what she had learned with the Director of Mental Health Services and they agreed to learn more about person-centered planning and to think about how it could be incorporated within their agency's services. They contracted with a consultant, Dr. Margolis, from an agency in a neighboring state who agreed to help them learn more about person-centered planning and its implications for organizational change.

Chapter 3

Outcome Management in Human Service Agencies: Overview and Implications for Person-Centered Approaches

The most important function of person-centered human service agencies for people with disabilities is to ensure that desired outcomes are achieved by agency consumers. Although the types of services and supports offered by respective agencies can vary immensely, the significance of achieving important outcomes in the lives of people with disabilities remains a constant across all person-centered agencies. In essence, attaining outcomes that impact the lives of people with disabilities in a beneficial manner represents the reason for existence of any human service agency.

As described in **Chapter 2**, person-centered approaches have been proposed recently as models that can assist agencies in achieving new and different consumer outcomes in a more beneficial and effective manner than what has traditionally occurred in human service agencies. If human service agencies are to fulfill their important mission of achieving person-centered outcomes to enhance the quality of life of people with disabilities, then the supports and services offered by the agencies must be provided proficiently. In particular, staff who are employed within human service agencies must perform their work skillfully and effectively on a day-to-day basis. When human service staff do not perform their work duties proficiently, then supports and services are not delivered in the manner in which they are intended to be delivered. As a result, consumers do not experience the outcomes in their lives that they want and need.

The significance of the proficiency of staff work performance on the overall quality of an agency's supports and services is well established. Any family member of an individual with a disability who receives services from a given human service agency can attest to the importance for that individual of how well agency staff perform their duties. Numerous research reports (see **Selected Readings**) also provide evidence regarding how the quality of an agency's supports and services is heavily dependent on the proficiency of staffs' work performance. Unfortunately, such research, as well as the experiences

of many friends and family members of people with disabilities, reflects that the work performance of human service staff in agencies around the United States has not always resulted in quality supports and services.

Problems with the quality of staff work performance across different human service agencies have been many and varied. The most noted problems generally have occurred in agencies providing residential services for people with disabilities. Such problems have been well illustrated in the popular press as a result of class action lawsuits initiated by family members and friends, as well as litigation stemming from civil rights violations cited by the United States Department of Justice. In each of the latter cases, numerous examples have been presented of staff not performing their work duties in a manner that beneficially affects consumers with disabilities. Although less numerous, there have also been equally compelling examples of problems with staff work performance in agencies providing other types of services, including educational, habilitative and vocational supports.

Problematic or otherwise inadequate work performance among staff is a particular concern within human service agencies attempting to function in a person-centered manner. As noted in the preceding chapter, one of the most significant obstacles agencies have encountered with person-centered planning is that respective staff do no always follow through with those work activities that are necessary to ensure person-centered support plans become operational. When staff, be they administrative, clinical or direct support personnel, do not satisfactorily complete those duties required for components of support plans to be put in place, consumers are not likely to attain the goals and objectives identified in their person-centered plans.

The responsibility for ensuring problems with staff work performance do not occur, and that staff perform their duties in a manner that helps achieve desired outcomes for agency consumers, rests with supervisory and management personnel. An explicit part of the assigned jobs of the latter persons is to direct and manage the daily work activities of agency staff. In order to fulfill such a responsibility, agency supervisors and managers must employ a supervisory approach that effectively impacts how agency staff complete their work duties on a routine, day-to-day basis.

If supervisory and management personnel do not utilize effective

supervision practices, then agency staff are given no direction or assurances in order to provide supports and services in a manner that will result in desired consumer outcomes. Lack of effective management is a primary reason why many human service agencies have experienced noted problems with adopting a more person-centered way of doing business. Ineffective management accompanied by nonproficient staff work performance is also a major source of disgruntlement among family members of individuals who receive poor quality supports and services from human service agencies. These problems are often compounded when agencies seek a more person-centered way of doing business. In person-centered agencies, supervisors must provide staff with environments that support the use of person-centered tools and then balance the wants and needs of consumers with the wants and needs of staff as well as with existing realities of funding and policies.

Problems with ineffective supervisory and management practices have occurred throughout the history of human service provision in the United States. In large part, the ineffective practices have occurred because most personnel charged with supervisory and management responsibilities have never received training in effective supervision strategies. Numerous surveys among supervisors in human service agencies have indicated the supervisors received no training in how to supervise staff work performance before assuming their supervisory roles. Actually, many supervisors in the human services are former clinicians, such as former nurses, psychologists, teachers, social workers, etc. These supervisors received formal training and experiences in their clinical profession, but no training in how to supervise. Other persons who have obtained supervisory jobs in human service agencies were promoted from the ranks of direct support personnel. The latter individuals also typically received no training in how to supervise the work performance of other staff.

When considering the importance of supervision on the quality of staffs' work performance, and the subsequent impact on consumer services, the noted lack of supervisory skills among working supervisors represents a major concern when agencies attempt to adopt a person-centered way of doing business. The purpose of this chapter is to present a staff and agency management approach specifically designed to achieve valued outcomes for consumers through effective supervision of staff work performance. The supervisory approach to

be described, *outcome management*, is particularly suited for ensuring that human services are designed and operated in an individual, person-centered manner for consumers who have disabilities.

Outcome management: ensuring desired outcomes for consumers through effective supervision of staff work performance

Outcome management as an approach to ensuring quality supports and services represents a synthesis of results of over two decades of applied research and managerial application in human service settings. As such, many of the specific strategies for assisting staff in performing job duties in a proficient manner are not entirely new. However, how the strategies are incorporated within a comprehensive management approach for ensuring the delivery of person-centered supports and services does represent a new means of managing human service agencies. Outcome management can be a vital tool for managers to use to encourage and support the adoption of person-centered values and strategies.

The essence of outcome management is that management of a given agency begins with the delineation of desired outcomes for agency consumers using person-centered assessment and planning tools, and then focuses the agency's day-to-day functioning around staff activities necessary for achieving the desired consumer outcomes. In short, every day the entire operation of the agency centers on one primary mission: the achievement of person-centered outcomes for agency consumers.

Operating a human service agency through outcome management entails following a protocol that consists of a series of management and supervisory steps. Before summarizing these steps, a brief overview is provided regarding the criteria around which outcome management was developed. These criteria represent the most common characteristics of successful management in human service agencies, including agencies considering adoption of a more person-centered approach to doing business.

The essence of outcome management begins with specification of person-centered consumer outcomes, and then focuses the agency's daily functioning around staff performances necessary to achieve the valued outcomes

Characteristics of Successful Management

Approaches to agency and staff management that have proven to be the most successful over extended time periods share three common characteristics. Highly successful management practices are *effective, efficient* and *acceptable.*

Effective Staff and Agency Management

From a bottom line perspective, the most important characteristic of successful management practices is that the practices are effective. Effective management means two things. First, effective management uses managerial and supervisory practices that result in staff performing their daily work duties in the manner the duties are supposed to be performed. To be successful in this regard means that the management practices change staff work performance when such performance is less than adequate, and maintain staff work performance when the performance is occurring at a level of desired quality. Second, effective management means that the daily work performed by staff results in desired, observable outcomes among the individuals with disabilities who are the recipients of staffs' work activities. Both of these indices of effectiveness must be routinely present if a management approach is to be successful in the long run — staff must be performing consistently and proficiently, and consumers must be achieving valued outcomes as a function of what staff are doing during the daily work routine. Specifically in regard to person-centered agencies, such a definition of effective management means that desired outcomes are identified from person-centered assessments of respective consumer preferences, wants and needs and then staff are supported in the creation of environments, services, and supports that lead to consumers attaining the desired outcomes.

Efficient Staff and Agency Management

Approaches to staff and agency management that are successful for extended time periods typically involve managerial practices that can be conducted efficiently. Time efficiency is important from a practical perspective; managers in human services often have many responsibilities and simply are not able to implement procedures that require substantial amounts of time. The latter procedures — that is, time *in*efficient management practices — typically are not applied for very long by most managers even if the procedures themselves are

effective in changing and/or maintaining staff work performance. In brief, the more efficiently or quickly management practices can be conducted in an effective manner, the more useful the practices will be for managers and the more likely it is that managers will use the practices consistently over time.

Acceptable Staff and Agency Management

The third characteristic of historically successful approaches to management is that the approaches are acceptable. Acceptable management practices mean that the procedures used to change and maintain desirable staff performance are well received by staff and managers alike. Equally importantly, in person-centered agencies the practices are acceptable to consumers and their family members.

Using managerial practices that are acceptable to staff is important for several reasons. In particular, reliance on managerial practices that staff find acceptable plays a significant role in enhancing staff motivation. It has become apparent, for example, that staff who are accepting of, and actively participate in, the identification of consumer wants and needs using person-centered approaches are more invested in consumer outcomes and consequently, more motivated to provide supports and services in a person-centered manner. The relationship between well accepted management practices among staff and staff motivation will be discussed further in subsequent chapters. Suffice it to say at this point that when management practices are not acceptable to staff persons who are the recipients of the practices, staffs' motivation to work diligently and proficiently can be hampered significantly.

A second reason staffs' acceptance of management practices is important pertains to agencies with strong union involvement. Generally, when staff are relatively pleased with how the work place is managed by their superiors, labor relations between management and the union run smoothly. In contrast, when staff are frequently displeased with what managers are doing, labor relations are strained. In the latter situations, managers and related personnel spend substantial amounts of time resolving disputes, attending hearings involving disgruntled employees, bickering over contracts, etc. When large amounts of time must be directed to such activities, there is little time left for managers to be actively involved in ensuring that staff perform diligently and proficiently to provide desired sup-

ports for agency consumers.

A third reason staff acceptance of management practices is important relates to the overall effectiveness and enjoyment of the job of managers and supervisors. When managers rely on supervisory practices staff find acceptable, staff typically respond favorably to what the managers are doing in the work place. Consequently, the quality of the managers' work lives is enhanced relative to the situation in which staff are frequently complaining or otherwise responding negatively to managerial activity. Relatedly, many managers tend to avoid actively supervising staff performance when the managers experience negative reactions from staff to their supervisory actions. When supervisors avoid or discontinue effective supervisory practices, then in essence there is no supervision of staff work performance. As noted earlier, when there is no effective supervision, there is no direction or assurance that staff work proficiently, or that agency consumers attain the outcomes identified in their person-centered plans.

In addition to staff acceptance of managerial practices, it is important that managers and supervisors themselves find the practices acceptable. Managers and supervisors will tend to avoid using procedures that are not very acceptable to them due, for example, to excessive time and effort necessary to implement the procedures. Regardless of how effective a supervisory procedure may be in changing or maintaining staff work performance, if the procedure is not well liked by managers and supervisors it will not be used successfully in the long run.

Although acceptability of management practices among managers and staff is critical to the long-term success of a human service agency, if an agency desires to operate in a person-centered fashion, then the practices must also be acceptable to consumers and their family members. It is sometimes assumed that if human service agencies are effective in supporting consumers in attaining desired outcomes then consumers and concerned family members will be accepting of what the agencies are doing. However, while effectiveness in assisting consumers in attaining outcomes is of course important, *how* agencies go about the business of supporting consumer outcomes also impacts the satisfaction of consumers and their families with respective human service agencies. A central component affecting how human service agencies operate is the management practices

that guide the day-to-day activities of agency staff.

As emphasized in **Chapter 2**, a defining characteristic of person-centered planning is that agency supports and services are driven by the wants and needs of agency consumers and their families. When management practices in a given human service agency are primarily dictated by factors other than the desires of consumers and their families — which often occurs in traditional, systems-centered agencies — then the latter's acceptance of the practices will at best be inconsistent. In contrast, when management practices are based on consumer wants and needs as identified through person-centered processes, the practices are typically well received by the consumers and their family members. Hence, an important yardstick with which to determine the degree to which agencies are operating in a person-centered manner is consumer and family acceptance of the management practices that direct agency operations.

Management practices of human service agencies that are successful on a long-term basis share three common characteristics:

(1) the practices are effective in changing and maintaining staff work performance

(2) the practices can be conducted efficiently

(3) the practices are acceptable to staff and managers as well as consumers and their families

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Component Steps of Outcome Management

An outcome management approach to managing staff performance in person-centered agencies consists of a series of action steps for managers and supervisors. This chapter section briefly summarizes the basic steps comprising outcome management. The summarization is intended to provide a quick overview of what constitutes successful staff and agency management in regard to providing supports and services on a person-centered basis. Elaboration on each component step is provided in subsequent chapters.

When reviewing the component steps of outcome management, a point of qualification is warranted. As noted earlier, the specific

management practices that have been synthesized into the overall outcome management approach have been developed through years of research and application in a variety of human service agencies. Only those management practices that have been demonstrated repeatedly to be effective in changing and maintaining quality staff performance are included in outcome management. Because of the years of research and application, outcome management represents the most carefully developed set of managerial practices that meet the three characteristics of successful staff and agency management: effectiveness, efficiency, and acceptability. However, it should also be noted that the efficiency criterion of successful management is not as well met through an outcome management approach as are the effectiveness and acceptability criteria.

Problems with the efficiency of outcome management practices exist on a relative basis. To date, no well-articulated approach to human service staff and agency management exists that is consistently effective yet extremely efficient. Effectively managing staff and agencies year in and year out is often a difficult and time-consuming undertaking. The practices constituting outcome management are designed to be as efficient as possible while still being effective and well received by staff, consumers and their families. Nevertheless, the efficiency issue is raised here to alert the reader that practicing the steps of outcome management will not provide a one-time, quick-fix approach to ensuring that an agency achieves person-centered outcomes for its consumers. The steps must be implemented consistently and repeatedly if an agency is to provide long-term, quality supports and services. Relatedly, ensuring that management practices constituting outcome management are well received by staff and managers as well as consumers and their families requires considerable thought and effort on the part of management.

To our knowledge, there is no clearly defined, effective and acceptable means of managing high quality supports and services that does not require hard work on the part of concerned managers. Practicing outcome management does become easier and less time consuming for managers, though, after the component steps have been used consistently for a period of time. Consequently, successful use of outcome management can enhance the quality of work life of managers over the long run in terms of making the job of staff supervision easier. Nevertheless, the job of a manager committed to

the adoption of person-centered values is never totally completed.

Successful staff and agency management requires consistent work on the part of supervisors; the job of a supervisor in the human services is never finished

Outcome Management Step 1: Specifying Desired Consumer Outcomes

The first step in outcome management is to clearly specify desired outcomes of agency supports and services in the lives of the consumers served by the agency. Consumer outcomes should be specified first on an individual basis using the values, tools and strategies of person-centered planning. Because most human service agencies provide supports and services for groups of individuals with disabilities, outcomes should also be specified for the entire group of consumers served within the agency. Outcomes for both individuals and groups of consumers should be specified to the degree that the outcomes are readily observable and measurable. Further discussion on means of delineating valued consumer outcomes is provided in **Chapter 5**.

Outcome Management Step 2: Specifying Necessary Staff Actions

Once desired outcomes for consumers to experience as a function of agency supports and services are clearly specified, the next step in outcome management is to specify what staff actions are necessary to achieve the desired consumer outcomes. Many of the necessary staff actions become apparent as person-centered service plans are developed with individual consumers (see **Chapter 4** for examples). Specification of staff actions also entails identification of staff work performances that need to occur on a routine basis for groups of consumers. Each set of work performances expected of staff directly relates to the achievement of individual and/or group outcomes among consumers. As with specification of consumer outcomes, identifying necessary staff work activities should be accomplished with a degree of precision such that staff work performance can be readily observed and measured. **Chapter 6** describes in detail how to specify the most important staff duties and actions necessary to achieve desired consumer outcomes.

Outcome Management Step 3: Monitoring and Evaluating Consumer Outcomes and Staff Actions

Once desired consumer outcomes are specified through person-centered planning, and the necessary staff work performances to help consumers achieve the outcomes are identified, the next step in outcome management is to monitor the occurrence of the outcomes and actions. Monitoring entails systematically observing the proficiency and consistency with which staff are performing expected duties and correspondingly, the degree to which consumers are attaining the desired outcomes. The latter component involves monitoring the degree to which each individual is attaining his/her desired outcomes as well as the degree to which an agency's entire group of consumers is attaining specified outcomes. Additionally, in agencies embracing person-centered values, the experiences of consumers while achieving their outcomes represent important monitoring data.

The importance of systematically and routinely monitoring staff work performance and consumer outcomes cannot be overstated. Systematic monitoring is the only means in the human service arena to objectively determine if respective agencies are fulfilling their reason for existence — to obtain important outcomes in the lives of the agencies' consumers. Information resulting from outcome and performance monitoring also forms the basis for future managerial actions. In brief, when results of monitoring indicate that staff are proficient in performing their work duties and consumers are achieving desired outcomes at a high rate, then managers can take action to positively support staff to maintain their work activities. Conversely, when results of monitoring indicate staff are not performing work duties in a manner necessary for achieving desired consumer outcomes, then managers can take corrective action to change staff work performance to a more desired level. Procedures for monitoring consumer outcomes and staff work performance are presented in **Chapters 8** and **9**, respectively.

Although monitoring of consumer outcomes and staff work performance is a vital part of successful agency and staff management, monitoring is often performed in a manner that staff find unpleasant. In turn, because of staffs' negative reactions to having their performance monitored, managers and related personnel frequently dislike

having to monitor staff performance. The dislike of monitoring by the latter personnel often results in inconsistent and inaccurate monitoring, as well as a total avoidance of monitoring activities. Again though, systematic monitoring represents the only means of having a readily available, objective data-base with which to determine if an agency is fulfilling its intended mission. Hence, special care is warranted to ensure that monitoring of staff work performance is conducted in a manner that is acceptable to staff. Procedures for monitoring staff work performance in a manner compatible with person-centeredness and that staff typically find acceptable are included in **Chapter 9**.

Monitoring consumer outcomes and staff work performance is a vital yet often disliked component of successful supervision; special procedures are necessary to ensure that monitoring is routinely conducted in a favorable and acceptable manner

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Outcome Management Step 4: Training Necessary Work Skills Among Staff

In order to ensure human service staff fulfill daily work responsibilities in a quality manner, it is of course necessary that staff know *how* to perform their job duties. It should not be expected that human service staff automatically or routinely possess the skills to perform their work duties proficiently. Many human service staff, and especially direct support personnel, have no formal preparation or training for working in a human service capacity prior to assuming a direct support job. As a result, the majority of persons employed in direct support positions do not have the necessary work skills to fulfill expected job duties when they begin their human service jobs.

Another reason human service staff should not be expected to automatically possess the necessary skills to perform their jobs is due to the nature of quality service agencies. The available knowledge base and technologies for providing effective supports for individuals with developmental and related disabilities are constantly evolving. Such evolvement is especially the case when agencies attempt to transition from being systems-centered to person-centered. What was considered state-of-the-art services in the early to mid 1980s, for example, was in many cases outdated by the mid 1990s. To illustrate, the technology for supporting individuals with severe disabilities

who display self-injurious behavior has advanced and changed dramatically since the early 1980s. Hundreds of applied investigations on functional analysis methodologies have appeared in the professional literature since 1985, with the subsequent development of an essentially new technology for understanding and treating self-injury relative to what was previously available. This new technology, often described as *positive behavior support*, generally embraces the core values of person-centered planning. In order for human service agencies to provide the best supports possible for their consumers, the agencies must take advantage of developments in the professional field such as positive behavior support and adopt the advances within routine service provision. Without ongoing staff training programs, staff working in such agencies cannot be expected to know about the new developments or to possess the skills to implement the new technologies.

Due to the reasons just noted, training of new and relevant work skills among human service staff is a vital component of effective supervision and management. New staff must be trained in the necessary work skills to perform their jobs proficiently, and experienced staff must be periodically trained in new developments in order to maintain a professionally current set of work skills. Consequently, training performance skills to staff is one of the basic component steps of outcome management. This particular step represents one of the most effective applications of outcome management, because an extremely thorough technology for training important work skills to human service staff has evolved over the last two decades. This training technology is described in detail in **Chapter 7**.

Quality human service agencies provide ongoing staff training to ensure staff maintain work skills that are current with the continuously evolving advances in the professional field

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Outcome Management Step 5: Supporting and Maintaining Quality Staff Work Performance

In essence, the component steps of outcome management summarized to this point set the occasion for the routine occurrence of quality staff performance and the attainment of person-centered outcomes among agency consumers. In many cases, once consumer

outcomes and related staff work activities have been carefully delineated, systematic monitoring of the occurrence of the activities and outcomes has occurred over time, and staff have been effectively trained in their expected work skills, agency supports and services will be provided in a quality manner. However, these component steps, although invariably *necessary* for ensuring quality agency operations, are not always *sufficient* for ensuring that consumers routinely experience the outcomes that the agency is designed to assist the consumers in attaining. Anyone familiar with the workings of a human service agency knows that supports and services do not always occur as they are intended to occur.

To help ensure that human service staff effectively perform their duties in a manner that consistently assists consumers in attaining the goals and objectives identified in person-centered plans, supervisors must actively support agency staff in working diligently and proficiently on a routine basis. Supporting quality work performance, which constitutes the fifth component step of outcome management, can represent one of the most enjoyable aspects of a supervisor's job in a human service agency. Procedures constituting this component step also provide some of the most enjoyable and rewarding work experiences for agency staff. This important step of outcome management though is often the most overlooked and under-utilized supervisory and management activity in typical human service agencies. There appears to be a natural tendency among supervisors and managers to assume that when staff are performing work duties diligently and proficiently, and consumers are routinely experiencing desired outcomes, that supervisory duties have been fulfilled. Such an assumption has resulted in the erosion of quality supports and services within numerous human service agencies.

There are many reasons why agencies that provide quality supports and services at a given point in time experience deterioration of that quality at a future time. These reasons will be discussed in subsequent chapters. Suffice it to say at this point that a critical component of long-term, successful supervision and management is actively taking steps to support agency staff who are performing their work diligently and proficiently. Supervisors and managers must work to *maintain* quality work performance among staff.

Supporting and maintaining quality staff performance essentially involves supervisors and managers providing a positive source of

motivation for staff. Human service agencies that are successful over the long run in ensuring that consumers experience person-centered outcomes as a result of proficient staff performance never take staff motivation for granted. Rather, agency managers and supervisors routinely implement procedures to: (a) support staff who are performing quality work and, (b) ensure that staff find their work experiences enjoyable.

Successful staff motivation entails supervisors and managers providing sufficient supports such that staff work diligently, work proficiently, *and* enjoy their work

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As will be described in **Chapter 10,** when supervisors and managers are successful in supporting staff such that staff work diligently and proficiently while at the same time enjoy their work, everybody in the agency benefits. Staff benefit because they like what they are doing on the job. Supervisors and managers benefit because agency supports are provided (by staff) in the intended manner, and staff respond positively to management due to the acceptable nature of the management style. Most importantly, consumers benefit because agencies are functioning in a manner that ensures the consumers attain their desired outcomes.

Outcome Management Step 6: Improving Inadequate Work Performance

When consumers are not experiencing desired outcomes, then it is incumbent upon managers and supervisors to take actions to change what agency staff are doing in order to help consumers achieve the outcomes. Because of the significant changes in agency operations often demanded by person-centered models, this sixth step is especially critical to agencies attempting to adopt a person-centered way of doing business. Taking action to change staff work performance represents the sixth and final step of outcome management. Using an outcome management approach, changing or improving staff work performance focuses on how supervisors and managers respond to what staff are doing in the workplace. By altering their response to staff work performance, supervisors can effectively and positively change staff work activities to bring about more desired work performances and consequently, obtain more

valued outcomes for agency consumers. **Chapter 11** describes practical ways in which supervisors can respond to staff work performance in order to help change or improve how staff go about their daily job duties.

COMPONENT STEPS OF OUTCOME MANAGEMENT

1. **Specify desired consumer outcomes**
2. **Specify staff work activities necessary to achieve desired consumer outcomes**
3. **Monitor and evaluate consumer outcomes and staff work activities**
4. **Train necessary work skills to staff when necessary**
5. **Support and maintain quality work performance**
6. **Correct inadequate work performance**

Chapter 4

Preparing Agencies and Staff for Person-Centered Planning

As indicated in the preceding chapter, an important component of successfully managing human service agencies in a person-centered manner is staff training. When human service agencies intend to adopt person-centered planning, the development of a comprehensive and systematic staff training program is a critical step that should occur early in the adoption process. A comprehensive plan of staff development lays the foundation for the successful transition to a more person-centered way of doing business.

The process of an agency moving to a person-centered focus and operation usually begins by providing introductory or overview training about person-centered planning. Effective introductory training typically involves a one- or two-hour planning meeting between a trainer and key agency personnel, followed by a one- or two-day introductory or overview training session for all staff. The purpose of the initial overview is to increase interest in person-centered planning and to serve as a catalyst for agency-wide adoption of person-centered values, tools and strategies. Often, this type of brief, introductory training is the result of various agency personnel having attended a professional presentation on person-centered planning. The training may also result from staffs' reading of materials on person-centered planning or discussion with a respected colleague about person-centered approaches. Increasingly, the catalyst for person-centered training in many agencies and organizations comes from individuals with disabilities and their families.

Regardless of the impetus for introductory training on person-centered planning, the training should occur when an agency is initially considering the idea of adopting a more person-centered way of doing business. To be effective, training of this type must be clearly endorsed by managerial or supervisory staff and introduced as being exploratory in nature. Following the training, an agency-wide decision can then be made to either aggressively shift to a more person-centered way of doing business *or* to refrain from making such a shift.

If a decision is made to embrace person-centered values and procedures at this point, then the agency is ready to begin the devel-

opment of a comprehensive and systematic staff development package. Designing and implementing the staff development package will typically necessitate follow-up training as described in this chapter along with specific outcome management strategies addressed in subsequent chapters. This chapter provides an overview of the essential components of a staff development process for preparing human service agencies and staff to function in a person-centered manner. Subsequent chapters provide more detailed strategies based on an outcome management approach to ensure that the components are successfully implemented and maintained in human service agencies.

The decision to shift to a more person-centered way of doing business requires an aggressive *agency-wide* commitment to person-centered planning and a comprehensive and systematic staff development plan

What is a Comprehensive and Systematic Staff Development Package For Person-Centered Planning?

A *comprehensive* staff development package for adopting person-centered values and procedures includes three types of activities: 1) initial and on-going training and technical assistance, 2) monitoring of staff work performance and, 3) ongoing management support to improve and maintain newly trained staff skills. This chapter focuses on the first type of activity — that of initial and ongoing training and technical assistance. Subsequent chapters provide an in-depth description of the latter two types of activities.

A *systematic* staff development plan includes four components: 1) a series of training sessions designed to introduce staff to person-centered tasks and tools, provide practice in using the tools, and receive feedback on the proficiency with which the person-centered tools are applied, 2) provision of follow-up technical assistance activities to identify needs, issues and next steps, 3) delineation of desired consumer outcomes that result from person-centered plans along with the staff activities necessary to attain the identified outcomes and, 4) provision of follow-up technical assistance and evaluation to ensure long-term adoption and refinement of new staff responsibilities as well as achievement of desired consumer outcomes. Of particular concern here are the first two components. The third component is addressed in the following two chapters, respectively, in terms of the

delineation of consumer outcomes and corresponding staff activities to help attain the outcomes. The fourth component of a systematic staff development package is addressed in subsequent chapters of this book (**Chapters 7 - 11**). The latter chapters describe how the component steps of outcome management can be applied to ensure that once a human service agency initially adopts a person-centered means of doing business, the agency continues to operate day-to-day in a high quality, person-centered manner.

Using this chapter as a guide, a comprehensive and systematic staff training plan for introducing person-centered planning within a human service agency may be designed and implemented by someone employed within the given agency. Staff development for person-centered planning may be provided, for example, by an Agency Director, a Training Director, or Quality Improvement Director. Alternatively, the training plan may be developed and implemented by a contracted consultant who is external to the agency. Both approaches have advantages and disadvantages with respect to costs, time commitments, and agency and staff responsiveness. The preferred training option is the one that best meets a particular agency's culture and resources. Regardless of the training approach selected though, personnel charged with creating the staff development plan should design and implement an approach that is doubly person-centered. That is, the plan must respond to the wants, needs and future vision of the agency's consumers *and*, while maintaining consumers' desired outcomes in the forefront, the plan must respond as much as possible to the wants, needs and future vision of the agency's staff.

Designing staff development plans that are doubly person-centered is important for several reasons. In particular, research and application in the human services indicate that staff who are involved in the creation of staff development activities are more likely to incorporate the content of the training within their job duties relative to staff who are simply informed of new expectations during managerially-planned staff training. Specifically in regard to the adoption of person-centered planning, staff whose concerns have been listened to and addressed throughout the training process are more likely to partner with consumers and their families to help attain the latter's dreams and desires.

A second and related reason for designing doubly person-centered plans is that applied research in the field of adult education supports the theory of *andragogy*. Andragogy refers to the art and

science of helping adults learn new skills. Based largely on the work of Malcom Knowles, andragogy suggests four important tenets in the staff development process. First, staff need to be active and self-directed learners. Second, staff have accumulated a set of experiences with which newly acquired information needs to be anchored. Third, staff are receptive to learning new skills when they believe the skills will help them better fulfill their roles and when they understand how the skills can be applied to their new roles. Fourth, staff need to bring specific problems to training experiences and need to be supported in seeking solutions to the problems.

Using basic components of a comprehensive and systematic staff development plan as just noted, as well as the applied theory of andragogy, this chapter describes the development and implementation of an agency-wide staff development process that focuses specifically on person-centered planning. The procedures to be described have been used by the authors to introduce person-centered planning within a wide variety of human service agencies. However, it should be noted that the activities to be described are intended to be used as guidelines and not as formal mandates. Readers are encouraged to use the information included in this and subsequent chapters (see also **Suggested Readings**) to refine the activities described here in order to develop a training plan that best meets the specific needs of the readers' own agencies.

A person-centered staff development plan recognizes and responds to the unique contributions, growth potential and support needs of individual agency consumers *and* staff persons

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Content of Comprehensive and Systematic Staff Training Programs Focusing on Person-Centered Planning

There are five content areas that should be included in a staff development plan focusing on person-centered planning. These areas are: 1) person-centered values, essential tools and strategies, 2) collaborative teaming, communication and conflict resolution, 3) using consumers' wants and needs to develop individualized service plans, 4) implementation of individualized service plans to attain desired consumer outcomes and, 5) organizational systems change strategies. These content areas are discussed in the remainder of this chapter. The point of concern here is that attention to each of these areas when

implementing the following steps of a staff development plan will help ensure that staff have the knowledge and tools to tackle all the complex tasks associated with a more person-centered way of doing business.

Case Study #1: Bloomfield

(Continued from Chapter 2)

Ms. Pikes, the consultant working with Bloomfield to help them learn more about person-centered planning, implemented a four-part staff development program. First, she met with Bloomfield's administrative staff and mid-management staff. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce them to person-centered values and practices and to ensure their understanding of the potential organizational impact that adoption of these values and practices might have on Bloomfield's services. As an outcome of this meeting, a Steering Committee was convened with membership drawn from administrative personnel, mid-management, direct service personnel and parents. The Steering Committee agreed to meet monthly for at least a year and articulated a clear mission statement: *"To support and evaluate Bloomfield's person-centered planning initiative."*

Second, following this meeting, Ms. Pikes designed a training needs-assessment to be completed by all direct service and mid-management personnel who were identified as participants in the training activities. Third, based on the needs-assessment data, Ms. Pikes provided all staff with a two-day workshop on person-centered planning. The training began with introductory comments from Bloomfield's Director, including an explanation of the membership and mission of the Steering Committee. The training concluded with agreement between Bloomfield's personnel and Ms. Pikes on a homework activity to be completed by all personnel.

Fourth, over the next nine months, Ms. Pikes returned three more times to Bloomfield to provide on-site technical assistance. During each visit, she met with the workshop participants to review their homework assignments, answer questions and problem-solve specific issues arising from person-centered activities. Each visit also included her participation in one of the Steering Committee's meetings. During these meetings, Ms. Pikes offered the committee members assistance with identified personnel, paperwork, policy and procedural issues arising from person-centered planning activities. In addition, she helped them develop and use a consumer-based system to monitor and evaluate consumer outcomes and staff performance.

Steps in Designing and Implementing A Person-Centered Staff Development Plan

Step #1: Provide a Series of Training Sessions to Introduce Person-Centered Values, Tasks and Tools

The first step in a person-centered staff development plan is to provide introductory training that describes person-centered values for all agency staff. The training should include an overview of common person-centered models and tools, along with practice in using some of the tools. A final component of the initial training should be an agency self-assessment regarding how its current way of doing business involves person-centeredness (see for example the discussion of agency self-assessment in **Chapter 2** and the **Appendix**). Generally, a one-and-one-half or two-day session is sufficient to begin the training process. For agencies that have difficulty releasing staff for time-concentrated training sessions, the training may be alternatively offered through shorter sessions such as three half-day sessions strategically planned over a two-to three-month period.

The following table provides a sample agenda for prototypical introductory training on person-centered planning. The goal of the training session illustrated in the table is to introduce participants to person-centered planning concepts, provide opportunities to practice using person-centered tools and strategies, and allow examination of the extent to which a respective agency currently embraces person-centered values and practices. The illustrated agenda emphasizes the core values, tools and strategies associated with the more common person-centered planning models. If an agency elects to provide training on one specific person-centered planning approach such as, for example, Essential Lifestyle Planning or Personal Futures Planning, a somewhat altered agenda may be needed. Regardless of the specific person-centered approach selected though, agencies are still encouraged to follow the four-step process described in this chapter to ensure successful implementation of a comprehensive and systematic staff development plan.

Sample Agenda for Introductory Training on Person-Centered Planning

Day One
Goals of Workshop
Icebreaker Activity
Definition of Person-Centered Planning
Discussion of Values and Practices Inherent in all Person-Centered Planning Models
Overview of Common Models, Tools and Strategies
Examples of Person-Centered Plans
Practice Using Person-Centered Tools and Strategies
Discussion of Practice Activity

Day Two
Review of Day One
Roles and Responsibilities of Person-Centered Planning Facilitators
Discussion of Current Support Staff and Managerial Roles and Responsibilities
Developing and Implementing Individualized Service Plans in a More Person-Centered Manner
Management Implications of Adopting a Person-Centered Way of Doing Business
Closing Activity (for example, the Agency Self-Assessment in the **Appendix**)
Homework Assignment/Date of Follow-Up Training
Discussion of Next Steps

The target audience for initial training on person-centered planning should include all direct support staff within the agency, as well as managerial and supervisory personnel. Selected families and consumers, especially those involved in various advocacy and leadership activities within the agency (e.g., persons participating on advisory boards, strategic planning committees), should likewise be included in the initial training. If an agency chooses to commit to a more person-centered way of doing business, it is also important that a brief overview training of two to three hours subsequently be offered to *all* consumers and their families associated with the agency.

To ensure discussion and participation among all participants,

each training session should be limited to 25-35 trainees. The audience make-up should include a mix of agency personnel in a variety of staff roles, along with the designated consumers and family members. For example, three training sessions of approximately 35 people each might be required to train 90 residential center staff and key family members. Each training session might target 5 QMRPs, 8 shift supervisors, 17 residential direct support staff, and 5 family members.

Although the exact agenda for an initial training session on person-centered planning will vary according to the specific person-centered model used as well as the idiosyncratic needs of the agency, there are two procedural features that should always be incorporated within the agenda. First, the session should begin with supportive comments from the agency director. Second, the session should be concluded with an agency self-assessment and an open discussion of the steps the agency will take next in the adoption of a person-centered approach. These two features are especially critical when the training is provided by a consultant who is external to the agency. Even when the training is facilitated by personnel within the agency though, these features are important to help assure staff that any concerns they have with what the agency is doing will be addressed within the agency's systems change process. These two agenda components also provide managerial personnel with an opportunity for listening and responding to potential issues that may arise during the transition to a person-centered focus and operation. Some of the more common issues that arise during introductory training on person-centered planning, and how those issues can be resolved, are described in **Chapter 12**.

Following the introductory training, it is important that staff have opportunities to practice using the tools and strategies discussed during the training with agency consumers. One useful strategy for providing staff with practice opportunities is to give each staff person a "homework" assignment to complete following the training. The homework should involve an activity that begins the process of identifying desired consumer outcomes. In addition, the homework should provide managerial staff with preliminary information about the specific needs for organizational and systemic changes within the agency. An example of a typical homework assignment is provided in the following Table.

Sample Homework Assignment
Following Introductory Training on Person-Centered Planning

1. Select two individuals to whom you currently provide services and supports and whom you think would benefit from having a more person-centered plan developed.

2. For *each* individual, select two maps or other group graphics assessment activity that you think would provide you and the individual's team with more person-centered assessment and planning information. (For example, a relationships map, a background map, a places map, a preferences map, a communication map, a future vision or dream map). One of the maps developed with each individual must be a future vision or dream map.

3. With each individual, identify the people (staff, family and friends) whom you think could contribute information to the map. Schedule a gathering to complete the maps; invite the identified people to attend.

4. With each individual, facilitate development of the maps. (Consider co-facilitating with another staff person so that one staff can facilitate and one staff can observe and give feedback.)

5. Prepare a brief summary of your experiences to share at the follow-up training. Who attended the gathering? What new information did you learn about the individual? How could you use this information to revise services and supports? What obstacles did you encounter? (For example, scheduling time for the gathering, getting invited people to attend, communication with the consumer, maintaining focus on the individual.) What obstacles would you anticipate encountering if you attempted to fully implement the future vision or dream map? (For example, staffing schedules, transportation, family opposition, funding constraints, policy/regulatory constraints.)

Step #2: Provide Follow-Up Technical Assistance Activities to Identify Needs, Issues and Next Steps

Approximately 60 days after the introductory training session, all staff should be reconvened for a one-half to one-day follow-up training session. A time period of around 60 days is usually necessary to allow staff ample time to complete the homework activity that was assigned during the initial training session. The purpose of the second training session is to provide staff an opportunity to discuss the maps or other homework assignments completed, describe their experiences and ask related questions, and reach consensus on anticipated future training and technical assistance needs and desired next steps. Reaching consensus on future training and technical assistance needs along with next steps, and having these activities endorsed by the agency's managerial staff, are essential components of the follow-up training on person-centered planning. These components will help ensure that newly trained staff do not simply adopt the vocabulary and some of the techniques of person-centered planning without truly implementing the values and practices of a person-centered approach. The process also ensures that subsequent staff development activities attend to the wants and needs of both consumers and staff.

Training and technical assistance needs identified during the second general training session on person-centered planning will vary from agency to agency. Some of the more common needs that are frequently expressed by staff during training include the need to review job descriptions, to enhance communication across management levels within the agency, to resolve conflicts that arise among members of support teams and to address agency policies and procedures that inhibit implementing person-centered plans in the agency. Additionally, staff often express concerns over having sufficient time to develop and fully implement person-centered plans. Many of these issues can be addressed through role-plays, open group discussions and case study illustrations.

In addition to the general problem-solving strategies just noted, satisfactory resolution of systemic issues that frequently arise during the second round of training on person-centered planning often require attention to three key areas. First, the results of the agency self-assessment activity should be reviewed in-depth. Second, how the agency can begin to address the person-centered wants and needs

(desired consumer outcomes) identified by staff during their homework assignments will need to be discussed. Third, expected new roles and responsibilities to be assumed by staff (staff actions) as they pursue desired consumer outcomes will need to be reviewed.

One mechanism for fulfilling staff development plans is the establishment of a steering committee or implementation team, which brings together all of the key stakeholders in a collaborative, team-based decision-making process. The primary function of this committee or team is to identify needs and issues as well as to oversee, monitor, evaluate and problem-solve all phases of the agency's transition to a more person-centered way of doing business. The team should address identified technical assistance needs such as additional training on specific person-centered tools, as well as organizational and systemic changes that will need to occur within the agency. The latter changes typically include, for example, the need for new intake and assessment processes, revision of individualized program forms and re-alignment of staff job duties.

In addition to steering committees and implementation teams, there are a number of other means for fulfilling technical assistance needs. Monthly open forum meetings, problem-solving around specific cases, and designation of subcommittees or task forces to propose solutions to problems all represent technical assistance approaches that can maintain movement toward desired consumer and staff outcomes. Regardless of the specific approaches used though, staff should remain an integral part of the technical assistance process to enhance staffs' acceptance of the activities. It is likewise important to ensure that desired consumer outcomes remain at the forefront of systemic change efforts.

Each of the technical assistance activities just noted can be facilitated by someone designated within the respective human service agency. Additionally, technical assistance from a source external to the agency can be helpful in many cases. The latter person (e.g., a person-centered planning consultant) often can represent a more objective source of input relative to personnel who work within the agency on a day-to-day basis. Objective input and evaluative review can be especially useful as agencies wrestle with the rather difficult issues involved in changing ongoing agency operations.

Along with providing needed technical assistance, appropriate next steps for those agencies that are truly committed to adopting a

more person-centered way of doing business might include: 1) identifying a small, pilot group of consumers with whom to demonstrate person-centered planning practices and to learn more about the process, 2) identifying a small group of staff who support the target consumers to participate in pilot efforts, 3) setting observable and measurable agency and consumer outcomes to be attained as a result of the pilot efforts, 4) empowering the steering committee or implementation team with the responsibility and authority to oversee pilot activities and, 5) committing the resources necessary to support the consumers and staff in attaining identified outcomes.

The use of a collaborative, team-based decision-making group to oversee and manage person-centered planning activities can help ensure that staff development programs result in desired agency changes. Carefully planned activities enable an agency to begin the important work of demonstrating the power of person-centered consumer outcomes, and learning from selected individuals involved in the process before considering agency-wide adoption of new or revised tools and strategies.

Step #3 : Delineate Desired Consumer Outcomes and Staff Activities Necessary to Attain the Outcomes

After reaching consensus on issues, needs and subsequent steps to the initial training and technical assistance sessions, the next critical step when introducing person-centered planning within a human service agency is to specify the desired consumer outcomes and staff actions necessary to attain the outcomes. Using the tools and strategies discussed in the initial training series, staff will have begun the development of a person-centered plan for a number of consumers as a result of their homework assignments. The latter consumers and their preliminary plans can represent a pilot group if the agency chooses to pursue person-centered planning activities at this point. A common error among agencies committed to doing business in a more person-centered way is the pursuit of full-scale plans for a large number of the agency's consumers — which tends to be an overwhelming task. Thus, the identification of a pilot group of staff and consumers is highly recommended. This step should be followed by a plan to review the pilot cases, revise conditions as needed and then expand to the agency's entire consumer population.

Whether an agency chooses to proceed with a small pilot group or with all consumers of the agency's services, staff must be given specific directions and guidance toward determining desired consumer outcomes in a more person-centered manner. Numerous questions must be answered if agency staff are to successfully develop and implement true person-centered plans. Common questions frequently arising that must be addressed include whether mapping will be a required part of the assessment process and if so, which maps will be required for all consumers. Also, what decision rules should be followed to develop specific maps? Will the mapping process begin with each consumer's upcoming service planning meeting? Which staff are responsible for facilitating mapping meetings? What guidelines must be followed in choosing a location for the meeting and in inviting family members, friends and staff? What guidelines must be followed in involving the consumer and securing his or her participation in the delineation of outcomes? What quality assurances will be put in place to ensure that the new assessment and planning information is truly person-centered? To help ensure that the responses to these and related questions meet the needs of both consumers and staff, it is crucial to involve direct support staff along with management personnel in determining the answers to these and related questions.

When an agency commits to developing person-centered plans for some or all of its consumers, the resulting compilation of the initial plans, containing the dreams, wants and needs of the pilot consumers begins the process of defining needed staff activities. Adoption of a truly person-centered approach demands staff and agency responsiveness to articulated consumer outcomes without dismissing attainment of the outcomes when resources are limited or non-existent. Fulfillment of the process often challenges managers to use the desired consumer outcomes to evaluate the need, and plan, for significant changes in staff job descriptions, activities and resources. Fulfillment of the process also challenges direct support staff to use the desired consumer outcomes to reconsider the nature of their daily activities and relationships with consumers as well as their long-term actions with other agency personnel, resources, and the consumers' families and friends.

The relationship between sample outcomes articulated by consumers and their families in person-centered service plans and the

team members' activities necessary to assist consumers in attaining the designated outcomes is illustrated in the following table. Using a table such as that illustrated below to map out the relationship between desired consumer outcomes and team member activities can be a highly valuable technical assistance activity. **Chapter 6** provides more detailed guidance in identifying staff work responsibilities and performance duties necessary to achieve desired consumer outcomes.

Examples of Desired Consumer Outcomes and Needed Team Member Activities

Desired Consumer Outcomes	Needed Team Member Activities
Delinda, Leroy, Shawn and Pam want to become homeowners.	Review maps. Identify obstacles and opportunities. Determine time lines/steps to attaining goals. Identify programs that train potential homeowners. Identify banks/mortgage companies that specialize in affordable housing loans. Identify subsidies available to people with disabilities and/or low incomes. Gather credit history information with consumers; develop savings plans. Secure loan and (as appropriate/available) subsidies. Establish relationships with real estate agents. Begin visiting potential neighborhoods. Choose target homes for each consumer; submit offers. Secure homeowners' insurance. Determine legal status of potential homeowner to secure/sign paperwork. Complete the home ownership process ("act of sale", "closing"). Assess daily living, safety and home maintenance skills. Develop appropriate service plan goals. Evaluate process from consumer and agency perspectives.

Doria, Leonora, Jose and Crystal want to work in community jobs.	Review maps. Identify obstacles and opportunities. Determine timelines/steps to attaining goals. Contact rehabilitation services agency to begin referral process. Contact and visit supported employment vendors with consumers. With consumers, choose supported employment vendors to provide services. Share maps with selected employment providers. With selected vendors, choose jobs, using their maps as guides. With vendors (as needed), problem-solve transportation once job is located. With vendors, coordinate social security activities/paperwork. With consumers, assess satisfaction with employment and match between hopes and dreams. Evaluate process from consumer and agency perspectives.
Ethel and Tawanda want to spend more time with their siblings and/or extended family members.	Review maps and share with family members. Identify obstacles and opportunities. Determine timelines/steps to attaining goals.As appropriate, develop a plan for letter writing and/or greeting cards. As appropriate, develop a plan for telephone calls and/or visits.As appropriate, develop a plan for leisure outing activities.As appropriate, develop a plan for reciprocal home visits. Coordinate on-going communication with family members.Assist consumers and family members in evaluating the new relationships.As appropriate, use relationships map to identify/develop other friendships. Evaluate process from consumer, family and agency perspectives.

James, Harley, Myra and Sasha want to move from their family homes into apartments.	Review maps. Identify obstacles and opportunities. Determine timelines/steps to attaining goals. Review or develop budgets and savings plans. Identify/visit potential apartments. Assist consumers in choosing apartments using their maps as a guide. Assess daily living/safety skills. Develop appropriate service plan goals. As needed, review staffing patterns. Evaluate process from consumer and agency perspectives.

Regardless of the specific consumer outcomes identified in person-centered plans, there are some general roles and responsibilities that all direct support staff who are involved in person-centered planning activities will need to assume. Some of these roles and responsibilities will be new for direct support workers. Other duties will be familiar, but will require a more focused emphasis on the consumer and family members. For example, although most direct support workers have experience in working with consumers and family members in team meetings, person-centered planning requires a much stronger emphasis on creating valued roles for the consumers and families than what traditionally exists during the meeting process. In particular, person-centered planning focuses much more heavily on encouraging the consumer and his or her family to discuss the consumer's strengths, dreams and hopes. Many agencies and staff quickly identify a need for technical assistance to assist staff in communicating more effectively with consumers and encouraging consumers to assume these new roles more comfortably.

One role within the person-centered planning process that typically is new for direct support workers is sharing information about a wide array of community support services. Most direct support personnel are familiar with traditional disability support services such as vocational rehabilitation or special education. However, direct support staff often are rather unfamiliar with less traditional support services such as affordable housing services, labor market resources and postsecondary education possibilities. The latter types of supports are frequently required to help realize identified goals and dreams within person-centered plans for many individuals who

have developmental and related disabilities. Here again, many agencies and staff quickly identify a need to learn more about, and link more closely with, these new potential resources.

An additional role that is often new for designated personnel in human service agencies that desire to adopt person-centered values and practices is that of facilitating consumer planning meetings in a person-centered manner. The importance of effectively facilitating consumer planning meetings relative to the success of the entire person-centered process is paramount. Hence, individuals who lead person-centered planning meetings must have very good team facilitation skills. Examples of the types of activities required of facilitators to effectively lead planning meetings are provided below. Elaboration on these duties is provided in subsequent chapters.

Roles and Responsibilities of Person-Centered Planning Facilitators
Identify/invite appropriate team members to attend team meetings. Secure their attendance and participation.
Identify appropriate location; arrange room comfortably. Assure comfort of all attendees.
Organize materials; introduce purpose and format of maps and/or other new assessment tools.
Ask probing and open-ended questions; be an active listener. Encourage brainstorming, problem-solving and action steps.
Record information; summarize themes.
Facilitate conflict resolution and consensus-building.
Take direction from the consumer and family; advocate for their dreams and support needs.
Set aside doubts and fears while the vision is being developed. Assist in identifying/locating resources to accomplish dreams.
Take responsibility for ensuring that all action steps are completed, with responsibility for completing the steps being shared among support team members and agency management.

Case Study #2: Working Concepts

(Continued from Chapter 2)

Upon notification that Working Concepts had been selected as a pilot site for person-centered planning activities, Mr. Millington shared the news with all mid-management staff during a weekly Management Team meeting. Next, he sent a memo to all direct service workers notifying them of the goals, dates and locations of the inservice sessions being offered to all pilot sites. He was careful to emphasize administrative support for the training in the memo by informing personnel that a portion of the $5,000 grant would be used to fund substitute personnel so that all personnel could participate in the inservice training sessions and by noting that he would be meeting with direct service workers and the Management Team after the training sessions to determine agency-specific next steps.

Over the next year, Working Concepts personnel attended four one-day training sessions on person-centered planning. During each session, teams of personnel from Working Concepts worked alongside teams from other agencies participating in the pilot project. The teams identified specific consumers to work with and practice using tools that would make their vocational services and outcomes more person-centered. In between sessions, Mr. Millington sat in on a number of team meetings, discussed successes and barriers with the teams, met individually with consumers, and dedicated a portion of each Management Team meeting to review and evaluate the pilot project's activities and outcomes.

Step #4: Provide Follow-Up Technical Assistance and Evaluation to Ensure Adoption and Refinement of New Staff Activities and Achievement of Desired Consumer Outcomes

Maintaining a person-centered approach to doing business can be as difficult as making the initial plunge to adopt person-centered planning in a human service agency. Once staff are trained and new person-centered activities are underway, the staff will need systematic support to maintain their designated work performances and to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies used to accomplish consumer dreams and change systems. To assist with this process, managerial

and direct support staff will usually benefit from identifying and jointly problem-solving implementation issues arising from person-centered planning activities. The following table provides a general template for a tool to assist direct support workers in gathering information to share with an agency's management team or steering committee.

Person-Centered Issues/Resolution		
Consumer:		**Date:**
Direct Support Staff:		
ISSUE	*SUGGESTED RESOLUTION*	*ACTUAL RESOLUTION AND DATE*
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

The tool just illustrated for identifying and resolving issues and obstacles to attaining consumer outcomes identified in person-centered plans is conceptually straightforward. Essentially the process entails identifying what needs to be done within an agency and then documenting that respective actions have been successfully completed. However, actually implementing the process requires considerable time, effort and skill on the part of management and direct-line staff — hence, the importance of combining person-centered values and practices with an outcome management approach. The remainder of this book details how an outcome management approach

applied within human service agencies can help ensure that what is desired to occur within the person-centered planning process actually occurs in a timely and quality fashion. Successive chapters work through the entire process from carefully specifying desired outcomes for agency consumers to maintaining and improving staff performance on a day-to-day basis to ensure the outcomes are indeed achieved.

Case Study #3: Independence County

(Continued from Chapter 2)

Dr. Margolis, the consultant hired to help Independence County staff and contracted providers learn more about person-centered planning, designed a comprehensive staff development package that began with the establishment of an interagency Person-Centered Task Force. Dr. Margolis assisted the county in convening a Task Force with a cross-section of county staff, provider staff, family members and consumers. The Task Force membership was also sensitive to administrative and direct service roles and embraced agencies and organizations typically excluded from such task forces — local employers, affordable housing and banking representatives, churches, and community action groups. A core group of about 15 people agreed to meet monthly to design and oversee a person-centered planning initiative and the remaining 20 people agreed to serve as resource members to the Task Force. Resource members were not expected to attend monthly meetings, but might be called upon to attend a specific meeting and/or to provide information to the Task Force between meetings. The Task Force decided to pilot activities with a small and heterogeneous group of the county's consumers and to expand services gradually over a three- to five-year period to all county residents served by the agency.

Over a six-month period of time, the Task Force developed a training package that would use the identified pool of pilot consumers to provide intensive training to case managers and to targeted teams of personnel from all contract agencies for intensive training. In addition, the training package would provide brief informational overviews to interested families and consumers. All case managers and teams who participated in the staff development activities would be required to engage in specific person-centered activities and to submit specific data to the Task Force for review and evaluation. Over the next 12 months, identified Task Force members provided the inservice training sessions and Dr. Margolis met monthly with the Steering Committee to review and evaluate progress and develop a plan for county-wide expansion of person-centered planning services.

Chapter 5

Determining Valued Consumer Outcomes Through Person-Centered Planning

The delineation of desired consumer outcomes is an integral component of all outcome management and person-centered approaches. As noted previously, the determination of person-centered outcomes is driven by the consumer and the consumer's family and friends. Desired outcomes focus on the consumer's gifts and capacities, and are visionary and future-oriented in nature. Person-centered planning also focuses on determining individual outcomes that are dependent upon community membership and commitment, and that emphasize supports and connections over services.

Through delineation of the types of outcomes just characterized, each person-centered plan has the potential to significantly change the quality of life of a person with a disability. As stressed throughout this text, if that potential is to be fully realized, then how human service agencies function must likewise be changed. Thus, a key factor in effectively altering the functioning of human service agencies to support person-centered values and practices is the identification of desired *agency* outcomes that are compatible with individual *consumer* outcomes. For agencies attempting to transition to a more person-centered way of doing business, the identification of compatible agency outcomes, along with a mechanism such as a steering committee or implementation team to support the change efforts, will enhance the likelihood of successful efforts.

The Relationship between Consumer Outcomes and Agency Outcomes

The transition to a more person-centered way of doing business requires a tremendous expenditure of energy on the part of a human service agency. When the process of developing person-centered plans for agency consumers is initiated without an accompanying recognition and commitment to systems change efforts within the agency, the process is almost always doomed to failure. It is in these instances that agency personnel typically say with much protestation, "We tried person-centered planning, but it didn't work!". Implementing person-centered planning without making necessary changes in

agency operations to support person-centered efforts also tends to have a negative impact on the agency as a whole. In such situations, agency staff often spend considerable amounts of time belaboring an agency's limitations and problems. Staff express frustration in not being able to help consumers attain desired outcomes by repeatedly complaining about problems within the agency. Anyone experienced in working in human service agencies in which staff frequently complain about agency operations knows the detrimental effects frequent complaining has on the agency's functioning and subsequently, the quality of supports offered to agency consumers.

Attempting to implement person-centered planning with individual consumers without addressing systems change processes within an agency occurs for several reasons. One reason involves agency leaders who verbally support person-centered planning but do not invest the time and effort to fully learn about person-centered values. In this type of situation, agency personnel change a few policies and the wording on a few forms and naively say, "We've been doing person-centered planning for years! We always include consumers in their planning meetings and ask them what they want." In more disturbing instances, agency personnel are not sincerely concerned about adopting a person-centered approach. In the latter type of situation, agency executives tend to say that their agency embraces person-centered planning, perhaps because it may seem professionally appropriate or politically correct to espouse a person-centered approach, but actually have no intentions of making major agency changes.

Another reason attempts to initiate person-centered planning occur without serious attention directed to changing the overall operation of an agency is based on more sincere intentions than the just-noted reasons, but nevertheless is an ineffective approach. Specifically, executives provide agency-wide mandates in attempts to rapidly initiate a person-centered model. Efforts are made to immediately change an agency from being systems-centered to person-centered by, for example, standardizing what is believed to be person-centered practices. Changing the existing value base and operating procedures to allow agencies to function in a person-centered manner usually requires major changes throughout an agency — changes that cannot be achieved in an immediate fashion, and rarely can be standardized.

For agencies that are truly committed to changing to a person-centered way of doing business, the key to maximizing successful change is to ensure that desired outcomes of the agency's overall functioning are well aligned with the types of consumer outcomes identified in person-centered plans. In order to develop agency outcomes that are supportive of individual consumer outcomes, careful consideration must be directed to how the two types of outcomes are developed. The first step in the process is to identify individual consumer outcomes that are truly person-centered. This critical first step helps consumers and their families specify personal dreams and desires, and sets the occasion for agencies to employ an outcome management approach for maximally supporting consumers in attaining chosen outcomes. This chapter describes person-centered means for developing these types of valued outcomes. Developing overall agency outcomes that help ensure consumer outcomes are successfully attained is described in subsequent chapters (see in particular **Chapter 8**).

If person-centered outcomes are to be attained by agency consumers, then overall agency outcomes and actions must be considered in the outcome planning process

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Developing Person-Centered Consumer Outcomes

Establishing Person-Centered Support Teams

Developing person-centered consumer outcomes requires the establishment of a support team for each consumer. As indicated in **Chapter 2**, in traditional human service settings, consumer planning teams are usually referred to as interdisciplinary teams, multi-disciplinary teams, or individualized planning teams. These teams typically conduct assessment activities, interpret assessment data, and use the data to develop individualized service plans (e.g., Individualized Habilitation Plans, Individualized Education Plans). These plans generally include annual or long-range goals along with short-term objectives. Sometimes consumer goals are tallied for all of the agency's consumers and the resulting data are used to guide the agency's establishment of a new service option or to modify an existing service process. More often than not though, each consumer's support team works to improve a respective consumer's skills and experiences without considering the agency outcomes or agency-wide activities necessary to accomplish the desired consumer out-

comes. More often than many agencies care to admit, some outcomes identified as desirous by consumers are rejected not because the outcomes are unattainable by consumers but because the outcomes are unattainable by agencies in light of the agencies' current resources.

If consumer outcomes are addressed independently of the agency's overall operations, when a problem occurs that inhibits a consumer's attainment of a designated outcome the team is likely to see the problem as being owned by the consumer instead of the agency. For example, a consumer may be viewed as not being able to purchase a home because the consumer's family does not have adequate income to pay a mortgage, or a consumer may be viewed as not being able to attend the local university because the individual uses a ventilator to assist with breathing. Another consumer may be disallowed an opportunity to work in a competitive community-based setting because of the consumer's self-injurious behavior. In each of these cases, the team essentially concludes that respective consumer outcomes are unattainable because of a given issue with the consumer. In contrast, application of a person-centered planning approach requires consideration of what the agency must do to support the desired outcomes — the agency is considered to own the problem. It is expected that the agency will alter its operation to *find* a way to achieve the desired outcomes, or find other agencies that can better support the consumer in fulfilling identified dreams and desires.

When a person-centered approach is adopted, support teams are convened and facilitated in a very different manner relative to traditional planning teams in human service agencies. Two changes happen very quickly. First, support teams are guided toward the delineation of outcomes that are desired by the consumer and the people who are most important in the consumer's life. These outcomes are individualized and meet each of the characteristics noted in the introductory comments to this chapter. Second, the new person-centered outcomes call to the agency's attention a need for new agency outcomes, new staff activities and a re-assessment of the allocation of agency resources.

Existing planning teams in most human service agencies typically can be used to form the nucleus of new, person-centered support teams. However, the membership of the planning teams should be

carefully assessed. As indicated in **Chapter 2**, person-centered support teams are made up of people who meet at least one of three criteria: 1) they know the consumer well, 2) they support or potentially can support the consumer and, 3) the consumer and/or the consumer's family choose to have the individuals be on the team. Thus, person-centered teams are as likely to consist of family members, friends and neighbors as they are human service professionals. One tool for identifying potential support team members is the relationships map. The people identified in the relationships map should be compared and contrasted with those people who are current members of the individual's planning team.

The following Figure is an example of a relationships map developed by one agency for a specific consumer as part of the agency's transition to a more person-centered way of doing business. The map was developed by the consumer (Jenni) and her planning team and used to expand the team's membership to include more family members, friends, and community members. This map was the team's first step in determining who could help Jenni and her team attain Jenni's desired outcome of more relationships.

Jenni's Relationship Map, used by Jenni and her support team to begin the process of determining desired consumer outcomes.

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A number of agencies traditionally have recognized the potential benefits of involving consumers and family members in the planning process and have included these people as planning team members. Hence, the inclusion of consumers and family members in the person-centered planning process is not considered a new development. What will be new when person-centered criteria are adopted is the potential exclusion of professionals. Traditionally, professionals are included in consumer planning meetings because a consumer has a particular diagnosis or support need, or because the agency's policies or regulatory authority requires the participation of certain professionals. A psychologist may be a required team member, for example, because the consumer engages in aggressive behavior, or a physician may be required because a consumer lives in a residential facility regulated by funding standards that mandate a physician's presence. In contrast, with person-centered support teams, these and other individuals would be part of the team if and only if they meet at least one of the three person-centered criteria.

Person-centered support teams consist of people who know the consumer well, who support or potentially can support the consumer and/or who are chosen by the consumer or the consumer's family to be on the team

In light of the differences between traditional teams and person-centered support teams, conflicts often arise early in the shift to a person-centered process regarding who the consumer and family desire as support team members versus who the service providers desire. Conflicts can also arise when agency policies or regulatory authorities require the participation of certain professionals who do not meet one of the three person-centered criteria. In some cases, a conflict arises because a consumer who has reached the age of majority does not want his or her parents to participate in the planning meeting.

In a pure person-centered environment, when the types of conflicts just illustrated arise then the voices of each individual consumer and family supersede those of the professionals and regulatory authorities. However, what often occurs in agencies in response to such conflicts is that an agency-wide policy is promulgated that impacts all individuals. For example, a policy may be generated that requires no person-centered meetings to take place unless a con-

sumer's invited family members and/or friends are present. Similarly, a policy may be invoked to indicate that all person-centered planning meetings must be held away from the target agency. These types of all-encompassing policies rarely fulfill the intentions of conducting planning meetings in a person-centered nature. To illustrate, with the latter example, some consumers may be uncomfortable meeting in an unfamiliar environment or the transportation and medical equipment necessary to transport the consumer to an off-residence site may hinder positive participation in the meetings. In short, these types of *one-policy-fits-all* strategies represent a systems-centered response to resolve conflicts related to planning meetings — a response that rarely results in person-centered outcomes.

In contrast to a one-size-fits-all, systems-centered approach to resolving conflicts about team membership, a person-centered resolution requires that these issues be addressed *one person at a time*. To illustrate, a nutritionist may be required by certain regulations to be a team member, but the nutritionist does not meet any of the three person-centered criteria for team membership. A potential, individualized resolution to such a conflict may be to have the nutritionist attend a portion of the meeting with a specifically defined role, provided the consumer and/or family do not object to the nutritionist's presence. The designated role may be simply for the nutritionist to identify preferred and healthy food items, and detail sample menus for a future living environment if so requested. In other cases, if the consumer and/or family object to a respective professional's presence on the team but certain regulatory policies require the professional's presence, the situation can be readily acknowledged to the consumer and the family as representing a problem with existing agency operations that will be addressed as soon as possible. It can be further indicated that the issue will be brought to the attention of the steering committee or other person-centered task force for resolution prior to future meetings. A temporary solution that may be tolerable to all parties would be to have the professional in question attend and listen during the meeting, but otherwise not participate. Alternatively, the professional might not attend the meeting, but give input on the consumer's personal profile before and after the meeting.

As agencies seek to establish workable support teams as part of the transition to more person-centered environments and services, agencies must take on the task of identifying issues such as those just

illustrated. Most importantly, resolution of each issue must occur on a person-by-person basis. Such resolution requires frequent and open communication between support teams and the agency's administration and/or person-centered steering committee. Throughout the process, agency personnel must remain aware that the power of person-centered planning is realized when lessons are learned about the agency one person at a time. Only when lessons are learned from working with consumers individually are the lessons eventually translated into new policies and procedures that allow for the successful development and subsequent attainment of true person-centered outcomes.

Issues related to membership on person-centered support teams must be addressed one consumer at a time — not through administrative policy changes that require the same procedures for every consumer

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Determining Who Should Facilitate Support Team Meetings

To be successful, person-centered planning meetings require *team-based* planning and decision-making. Although identification and participation of appropriate members to serve on support teams is essential as just indicated, bringing team members to the table is only part of the challenge. Facilitation of support team meetings in a person-centered fashion is also critical. Without effective facilitation, a team that includes all of the key players can still end up operating in a very systems-centered manner, with subsequent development of very systems-centered plans. As indicated at the conclusion of **Chapter 4**, effective person-centered team facilitation is heavily dependent upon the skills of the facilitator. Consequently, determining *who* should facilitate planning meetings represents an important decision that needs to be made early in an agency's move to a person-centered way of doing business.

Determining facilitators for support team meetings should not be based on job descriptions of agency personnel. That is, agencies should not decide that case managers or QMRPs be assigned responsibility for team facilitation simply because of their agency roles. Rather, determining facilitators of person-centered meetings should be dictated by the values and skills held among potential facilitators. In most cases, anyone can facilitate a person-centered planning meet-

ing provided the person possesses certain knowledge and skills. In particular, team facilitators should: 1) understand the values associated with the person-centered model in use, 2) skillfully perform relevant person-centered procedures such as mapping, 3) be skilled in active listening, 4) employ conflict resolution and other communication strategies and generally, 5) coordinate meetings effectively such that appropriate closure is reached on all relevant issues. Consumers, family members, case managers, social workers, teachers, QMRPs or essentially anyone sincerely interested in the consumer's welfare may have the appropriate background and skills to effectively facilitate person-centered planning meetings.

Selection of facilitators for person-centered planning meetings should not be made through an agency-wide policy that dictates who will serve as team facilitators (which represents a system-centered approach). Rather, facilitators should be selected on an individual consumer basis. Once a facilitator is selected for a certain consumer's planning meeting, it can be helpful initially if the facilitator identifies one or more people to co-facilitate the meetings and follow-up activities. The co-facilitator can assist with the meeting and also represent a source of feedback for the primary facilitator regarding the latter's effectiveness in facilitating the meeting. Relatedly, it is helpful if during the early stages of person-centered meetings, the agency carefully monitors and evaluates the roles of facilitators. Such an evaluation should allow a determination regarding which staff provide the best match with respect to staff time, caseloads, current responsibilities, etc., as well as overall effectiveness in facilitating meetings. Ultimately, these evaluative data may be used to assign facilitation responsibilities to certain job descriptions or to retain a policy supporting identification of a facilitator for each individual team based on the consumer's preferences and the team's make-up.

When an agency first begins the process of moving toward a person-centered way of doing business, it can be helpful to consider using an external consultant who is experienced in person-centered planning approaches to co-facilitate initial planning meetings along with agency staff. In this manner, other support team members can begin to acquire relevant facilitation skills by observing an experienced facilitator. If an external consultant is employed to begin the planning meeting process, it should be remembered that the process typically entails repeated meetings (see following discussion).The

consultant would need to continue facilitating respective meetings until support team members demonstrate effective facilitating skills as well as until a given consumer's plan is well on the way to being fully implemented.

Holding Person-Centered Planning Meetings

Once the members of a person-centered planning team have been identified along with the team facilitator, the team meeting process can be initiated. The team should expect to meet between three and four times to discuss and finalize specific goals in the person-centered planning process. By the end of the third or fourth meeting, the team should have completed assessment activities and developed a service plan. Person-centered tools and strategies as described in **Chapters 2** and **4** should be applied within a general meeting agenda that includes the following items: 1) assurance that the team includes representatives from all key constituents, 2) review of the values, tools and strategies associated with the person-centered planning approach in use, 3) identification and confirmation of the desired consumer (and agency) outcomes, 4) delineation of a plan of activities necessary to attain the desired outcomes and, 5) affirmation of the team's roles and goals in planning and overseeing the process.

Although all of the just-noted meeting agenda items are important, success in fulfilling every aspect of a person-centered plan is tied to the accurate determination of the consumer's personal dreams and desires. Accurately identifying desired consumer outcomes through a person-centered planning approach can be a difficult task for many agencies to initiate. In many ways, asking a team that includes agency staff to dream about more desirable future outcomes for consumers and their agency is a lot like asking individuals with disabilities and their families to dream about a more desirable future. It can be difficult for team members, and especially agency staff, to envision a future in which existing policies, procedures and paperwork will not inhibit the attainment of newly desired consumer outcomes. To accomplish the task, the entire planning team must first be able to let go of real and perceived systems barriers and basically, dream.

The following illustration, frequently referred to as *California Dreaming*, represents a team activity that a number of planning teams have found helpful to begin the dreaming process needed to identify desired outcomes for consumers as well as the agency in general. It

can be helpful for each team member to individually respond to the questions in the illustration, and then for the full team to formulate consensus responses. The only rule for *California Dreaming* at this point is that team members must not articulate potential or real barriers to fulfilling expressed dreams. There will be time later for identifying and resolving barriers as part of the overall person-centered planning process.

"California Dreaming"
When I think of myself or my family member two years from now, I dream of ...

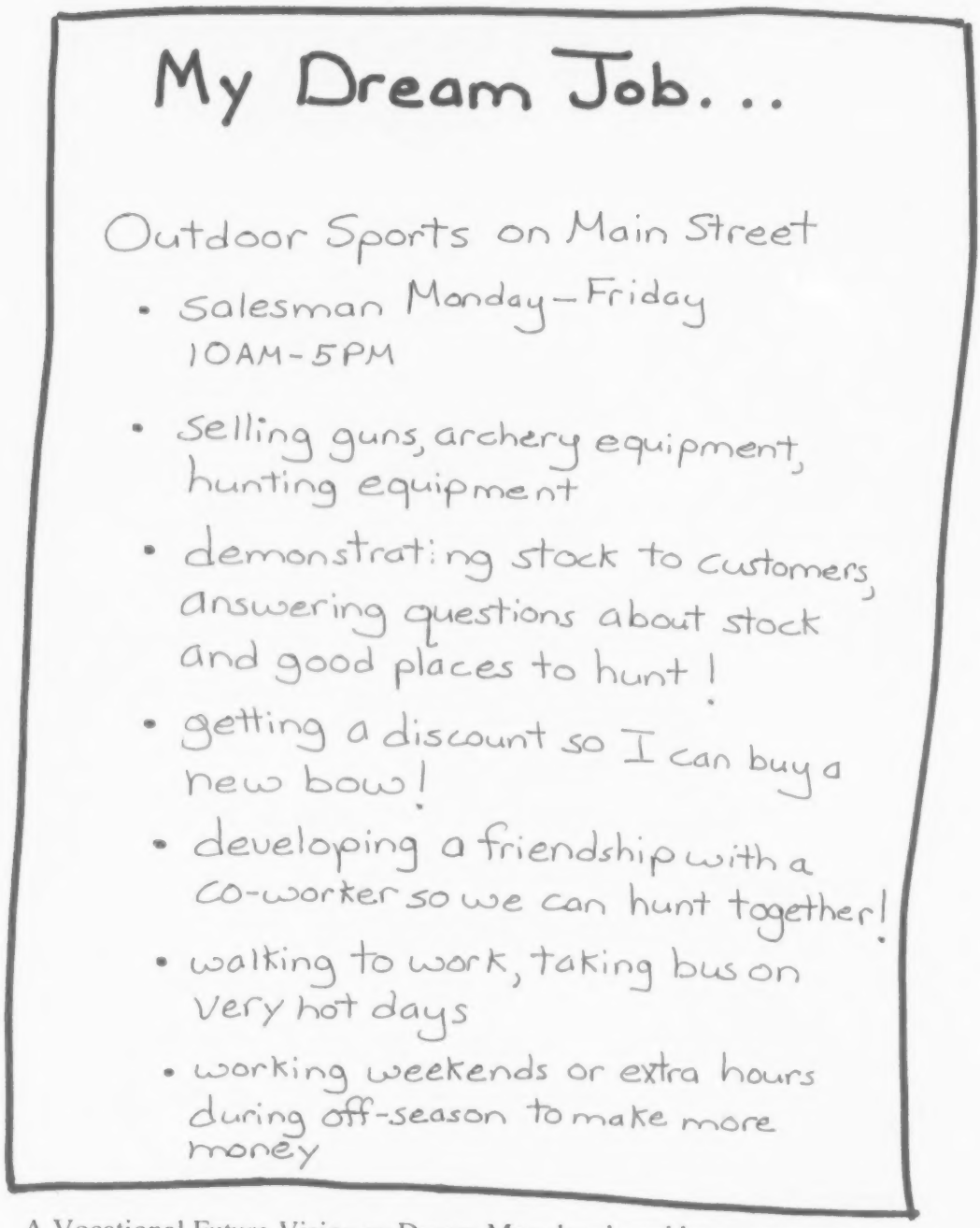
- living where and with whom?
- working where and doing what?
- learning where and about?
- spending free time with whom and doing what?

California Dreaming — an example of an activity to assist person-centered teams in setting desired consumer outcomes.

The activity of *California Dreaming* should be supplemented with other person-centered activities during planning meetings for identifying the dreams and desires of agency consumers. Generally the most frequently used person-centered strategy to identify desired consumer outcomes is mapping. Various types of mapping strategies were discussed in **Chapter 2**. An example of a preferences map developed by one consumer and his team to help him describe his vocational likes and dislikes is presented on the following page. The subsequent map presented describes the consumer's ideal job.

Employment Likes	Employment Dislikes
Sales position in a Sporting goods store	a stock or warehouse position
Sell guns, hunting equipment, archery equipment	using a cash register
read catalogs about new equipment	sell camping/sports equipment only
talk to customers	working evenings
work 10AM – 5PM	heat, sweating
walk to work or take bus	moving away from home to get a job
having work "buddies" to go hunting with	handling income taxes
helping customers — demonstrating products, showing magazines on hunting	working weekends (during hunting season)
	people talking about my disability, being afraid of me

A Vocational Preference map developed by a consumer and his support team.


My Dream Job...
Outdoor Sports on Main Street
• salesman Monday–Friday 10AM-5PM
• selling guns, archery equipment, hunting equipment
• demonstrating stock to customers, answering questions about stock and good places to hunt!
• getting a discount so I can buy a new bow!
• developing a friendship with a co-worker so we can hunt together!
• walking to work, taking bus on very hot days
• working weekends or extra hours during off-season to make more money

A Vocational Future Vision or Dream Map developed by a consumer and his support team.

The following figure provides an example of a preferences map developed by another consumer's team to describe her preferences

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for her daily routine.

Helping Shawn Have a Good Day
Likes
Structure, certainty, knowing what is going to happen next
motion: carrides, swings, walking, rocking chairs
tactile activities: clay, massages, yarn crafts
physical activities: vacumning, walking, touching/putting together parts
affection: hugs, pats
pizza! cookies!
dogs – big ones
hot tubs, baths
afternoon, early evenings
Dislikes
being rushed, pushed, or pulled
new people, new places
sitting/waiting for more than 5 minutes
mornings!
people who can't sign tactually – being told "No", "Bad" or "Stop"
being dirty – washing pots and pans, recycling bottles
soiled clothing
sharing a bathroom
more than 2-3 people in a group
dental work

A Preferences Map for a consumer with a significant disability developed by her person-centered team to help identify desired consumer outcomes.

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Each of the maps just illustrated is comparable in that each was: (1) created by teams of consumers, family members, friends and professionals, (2) facilitated by a skilled team leader, (3) used as assessment activities to determine desired consumer outcomes to include in individual service plans, and (4) reviewed by agency personnel to determine necessary and desired agency outcomes. These maps are also distinctly different in that the former maps reflect preferences and desired outcomes articulated primarily by a consumer and expanded and clarified by his support team members whereas the latter map reflects preferences identified by family members and professionals through interpretation of a consumer's behaviors and utterances observed in situations outside of the meetings.

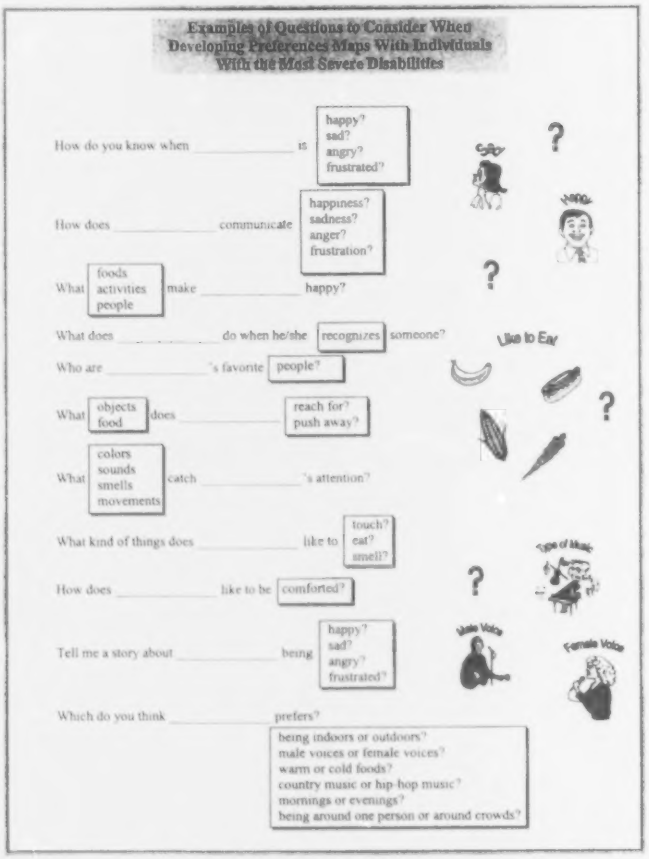
Case Study #1: Bloomfield

(Continued from Chapter 4)

As one component of their staff development program, Bloomfield staff and their consultant, Ms. Pikes, identified 25 individuals residing at Bloomfield to serve as a pilot group for the center's person-centered planning activities. Part of Bloomfield's operation consists of 25, four-bedroom houses. Eight individuals reside in each house and supports are provided by a team of direct care workers.

Between the first and second training sessions, each of the 25 teams was asked to develop a relationships map, a preferences map and a hopes, dreams and fears map for one individual living in a respective house. During the follow-up training session, Ms. Pikes guided the teams through the development of a wall chart summarizing the outcomes or dreams desired by the 25 pilot individuals. Bloomfield staff were encouraged when they realized that many of the outcomes desired by the 25 individuals were attainable with current resources. These desired outcomes, such as more choice-making opportunities with regard to campus leisure activities, meals and community outings could be addressed with additional staff training and monitoring of staff performance. Other desired outcomes, such as one individual's desire to move away from Bloomfield to live closer to his sister and another individual's dream of working at a local sports arena seemed less realistic to some Bloomfield staff, but attainable "by a lot of work" by many people.

In many cases, the development of various maps during person-centered planning meetings is a sufficient activity for accurately determining desired consumer outcomes in and of itself. In other cases, mapping strategies will need to be supplemented with additional activities to ensure that personal likes are truly identified. Particular concern is warranted in this regard in those agencies providing supports and services for individuals who have very severe or profound disabilities that prohibit ready expression of their likes and dislikes. For consumers whose communication skills are not sufficiently developed to allow the individuals to clearly express their desires, such as the latter example just illustrated, information provided by support team members who best know the consumers must be heavily relied on to identify the consumers' favorite likes and dislikes. The following figure is a template of questions service teams have found useful to guide them in developing a preferences map for individuals with severe or multiple disabilities.


Examples of Questions to Consider When Developing Preferences Maps With Individuals With the Most Severe Disabilities
How do you know when _____ is happy? sad? angry? frustrated?
How does _____ communicate happiness? sadness? anger? frustration?
What foods activities people make _____ happy?
What does _____ do when he/she recognizes someone?
Who are _____'s favorite people?
What objects food does _____ reach for? push away?
What colors sounds smells movements catch _____'s attention?
What kind of things does _____ like to touch? eat? smell?
How does _____ like to be comforted?
Tell me a story about _____ being happy? sad? angry? frustrated?
Which do you think _____ prefers?
being indoors or outdoors?
male voices or female voices?
warm or cold foods?
country music or hip-hop music?
mornings or evenings?
being around one person or around crowds?
Like to Eat
Type of Music
Male Voice
Female Voice

Examples of questions to consider when developing Preference Maps with individuals who have the most significant disabilities.

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In addition to relying on information provided by support team members regarding the dreams and desires of consumers with very severe disabilities, it is usually helpful to conduct formal preference assessments to support the opinions of the team members. A rather comprehensive technology has recently been developed for assessing various types of preferences among individuals whose severity of intellectual and communicative disabilities prohibit the individuals from expressing their likes and dislikes through conventional means (see **Formal Preference Assessment Procedures For Persons With Severe Communication Disabilities** section of the **Selected Readings** for additional information). Although somewhat time consuming to conduct, formal preference assessments can help ensure that what support staff believe to be a respective consumer's likes and dislikes are indeed accurate representations of the consumer's preferences. Because desired consumer outcomes are derived from individual preferences, the time spent assessing preferences will ensure truly desired consumer outcomes.

Case Study #2: Working Concepts

(Continued from Chapter 4)

As one component of their staff development program, Working Concepts identified 15 individuals who were considered candidates for community-based, supported employment. Job coaching staff met with each of the 15 individuals and other identified significant people and guided each team through the development of a "Vocational Preferences Map" and an "Employment Dream Map". By combining this assessment information with information on specific vocational skills and aptitudes that they obtained from a variety of other vocational evaluation tools, they were ready to begin the job development process.

The job development staff reviewed the preferences and dreams of the 15 targeted individuals and concluded that they needed to identify six jobs in janitorial services, four jobs in office work, three jobs in grocery stores, one job in sales and one job in animal care. As they reviewed the local labor market, the vocational skills and aptitude data with the targeted individuals they began to narrow down their job development efforts to specific occupational clusters, and then specific locations and specific jobs with requirements that matched each individual's dream, preferences and skills. As job openings were identified, the job coaches met with each individual and assisted them in comparing their vocational preferences and employment dreams with the realities of the available jobs so that they could make an informed decision before they met with the potential employer for a job interview.

A Final Criterion for Determining Consumer Outcomes

Using the tools and strategies discussed in this as well as preceding chapters, outcomes can be determined that represent the most important desires and dreams for individual agency consumers. These identified outcomes must typically be translated into an individualized service plan as dictated by the agency's funding, policies and procedures. As noted in **Chapter 2**, person-centered refers to both the form and content of assessment and planning activities. Thus, translation of articulated and desired consumer outcomes into service plans warrants careful consideration. Given an agency's current funding, policies and procedures, *all* of a consumer's desired outcomes may not be able to be supported by the respective agency at the time the annual service plan is being written. When this situation occurs, a more systems-centered agency will respond by negating or diminishing the consumer's preferences and desires and offering a compromise service or support currently offered by the agency or attainable with its given resources. In contrast, a more person-centered agency will respond by acknowledging the agency's constraints and assist the consumer in transferring to another agency and/or in breaking the desired outcomes into short-term and long-term outcomes. The latter process will result in identifying those outcomes currently able to be supported by the agency and those outcomes that the agency will use to identify and pursue new agency actions and outcomes.

Once valued outcomes have been determined, the stage is set for putting into motion the various staff and agency actions necessary to help consumers attain the desired outcomes. The remaining chapters in this text focus on how to ensure that the desired outcomes of agency consumers are indeed attained, beginning in the next chapter with the process of carefully delineating staff responsibilities necessary to support consumers in realizing their dreams. Before describing staff and agency tactics and strategies for effectively supporting consumers in attaining desired outcomes however, one final criterion for the successful determination of consumer outcomes warrants mention.

As stressed earlier, the entire success of person-centered planning is related to the accurate identification of consumer dreams and desires. It was likewise indicated that an outcome management approach to effectively operating human service agencies begins with the delineation of desired outcomes for agency consumers. In short,

human service agencies cannot effectively support consumers with disabilities in attaining desired outcomes if respective agency personnel do not know what constitutes those outcomes. The strategies discussed in this and preceding chapters are designed to result in accurate determination of desired consumer outcomes. However, it is also critical that consumer dreams and desires be *specifically and clearly described* in respective person-centered plans.

Failure to describe desired consumer outcomes specifically and clearly in the planning process has occurred with numerous person-centered plans across human service agencies. When outcomes are not carefully described, which seems to occur most frequently within the planning process involving consumers who experience significant difficulty expressing their likes and dislikes, attainment of the outcomes is difficult. In the latter situation, different support team members interpret a consumer's plan differently, and work to attain different outcomes for the consumer. In some cases, the outcomes that various support team members work to attain with the consumer do not represent something the consumer actually desires. In a recent plan for an individual with multiple severe disabilities, for example, it was indicated that the individual desired to have more frequent access to ice cream for her dessert. The plan was not sufficiently specific though to indicate what type of ice cream the individual liked, which resulted in some support staff providing a type of ice cream that the individual actually disliked.

Providing specificity of desired outcomes in consumer plans is especially important in human service agencies in which many support staff interact with an individual consumer such as in congregate living situations (e.g., group homes, residential centers). Plans need to be specific in such situations in order for each support person who interacts with a consumer to be able to interpret the plan accurately. However, clearly specifying desired outcomes does not mean that person-centered plans need to be detailed to the point of being overly wordy. Rather, desired outcomes need to be described with a degree of specificity only to the point that support team members can readily and consistently agree when the outcomes will and will not be achieved. Such specificity can usually be obtained within the planning team meeting by reaching a consensus among team members as to what will represent the successful attainment of the outcome in the consumer's life. Once a consensus is reached on each identified

outcome, then the process of putting the supports in place to assist the consumer in attaining the outcomes can effectively begin.

Case Study #3: Independence County

(Continued from Chapter 4)

As a result of the staff development package, all of the direct care and mid-management staff in Independence County were trained on principles and practices of person-centered planning. In addition, a series of public, informational forums were held targeting families and individuals with disabilities. By the conclusion of the training, 75 pilot IHPs had been developed using a pilot protocol and revised IHP form developed by the person-centered task force. The task force summarized the 75 dreams identified by the pilot consumers and spent one meeting reflecting on the county's capacity to develop services and supports to assist the target individuals in attaining their dreams. As the task force reviewed the compilation of desired dreams several service delivery areas emerged as county-wide service gaps, specifically home ownership options for individuals with disabilities and community-based supported employment options. Several policy or procedural gaps emerged as well, specifically, consumer and family choice regarding attendees at person-centered assessment meetings, flexibility in use of respite hours and choice of personal care attendants.

While each consumer's individualized team began pursuing implementation of goals and a support plan for each of the 75 individuals, the person-centered task force used these needs, identified from the person-centered plans, to structure their systems change activities for the current year.

Chapter 6

Specifying Staff Actions to Support Consumers In Attaining Person-Centered Outcomes

When agencies adopt a person-centered way of doing business, the jobs of agency staff typically assume a wider range of responsibilities relative to staffs' traditional job duties. Many of the new responsibilities to be assumed by agency personnel as jobs change and agencies become more person-centered were illustrated in **Chapter 4**. If staff are to successfully fulfill new responsibilities associated with person-centered planning, the staff must of course be aware of what constitutes their newly expected duties. Carefully articulating staff job responsibilities represents a key component of an outcome management approach for operating human service agencies in a person-centered manner.

Clearly specifying staff job duties is important for the successful operation of a person-centered agency for several reasons. Most apparently, as just indicated, human service staff cannot be expected to fulfill job responsibilities to support agency consumers in attaining person-centered outcomes unless staff are aware of the duties that comprise those responsibilities. Relatedly, staff cannot be trained to perform new duties if those duties are not clearly identified.

In some ways, specifying what constitutes respective jobs in a human service agency seems to represent a rather obvious component of operating the agency. However, clear specification of job duties for staff is a frequently overlooked function in many agencies. Job duties are not specified to the degree that clearly informs staff of what is expected of them because, for example, managers or supervisors are too occupied with other activities and feel they do not have time to carefully specify job duties for staff. Other managers believe detailed and highly specific instructions regarding how to perform a job duty should not have to be provided for staff. In some cases, managers and supervisors do not inform staff exactly what is expected of them because the managers and supervisors themselves are not fully aware of what their staff should be doing to support person-centered values and practices. It is for this reason, as noted in **Chapter 4**, that agencies must design staff development programs that respond to the wants and needs of both consumers and staff.

Regardless of the reasons for failure to specify for staff what constitutes their job duties, the resulting impact is that the likelihood of an agency successfully operating in a person-centered manner is reduced substantially. Assessing staffs' wants and needs and then specifying what staff must do in order to support consumers in attaining person-centered goals is just as important as identifying the desired consumer outcomes in the first place. In short, identifying consumer outcomes through person-centered planning and specifying staff actions to assist consumers in attaining the outcomes go hand in hand for effective management of high quality human service agencies. The purpose of this chapter is to describe how staff actions can and should be specified as part of an overall outcome management approach for operating human service agencies in a person-centered manner.

Qualifying The Impact of Job Specification For Managing Person-Centered Agencies

Before describing the process of specifying staff job duties in a manner that assists consumers in attaining desired outcomes, a basic premise of job specification warrants highlighting. Specifying job duties such that staff know exactly what is expected of them in the work place is usually a *necessary* part of operating a human service agency in a person-centered manner, but it is rarely a *sufficient* part. In some cases, providing clear instructions regarding what given jobs entail does result in staff successfully fulfilling their work responsibilities. In many other cases though, job responsibilities are not fulfilled satisfactorily even though managers believe that various staff have been provided with very clear instructions about job duties. Any experienced manager or supervisor knows that at times, and particularly with certain staff, job duties will not be completed at the desired level of quality even though staff are fully aware of their job duties.

The reasons for various staff not fulfilling specified job responsibilities are numerous and varied. Typical examples include, for example, staff not understanding the relationship between desired consumer outcomes and their own work actions, and staff not believing that agency management considered their wants and needs when new staff duties were designated. On a more global level, staff may be working in an environment that has not been sufficiently motivating to engender a strong work ethic. Relatedly, staff may be seriously

disgruntled with previous management actions and respond to such actions by reducing their work efforts.

Supervisory strategies for supporting staff in adequately fulfilling job duties are addressed in detail in **Chapters 10** and **11**. The primary point here is that specification of job duties for supporting agency consumers in attainining desired outcomes should be viewed as a prerequisite for operating a human service agency in a person-centered manner, but not viewed as insurance that job duties will be satisfactorily completed. In essence, specifying staffs' job expectations is a critical outcome management step for *setting the occasion* to ensure that work will be performed in a manner that leads to person-centered consumer outcomes. Job specification must be completed in conjunction with the other outcome management activities described in preceding and subsequent chapters to actually ensure that respective job duties are completed satisfactorily.

Carefully specifying staff job duties for supporting consumers in attaining desired outcomes is *necessary but rarely sufficient for managing human service agencies in a person-centered manner*

Determining Priority Work Duties for Job Specification

Most human service jobs entail a wide variety of specific work duties. Some of the work duties that are most critical for successful incorporation of person-centered practices within an agency have been described previously. The important duties to be completed by staff who, for example, facilitate person-centered planning meetings were noted in **Chapters 4** and **5**. However, the work duties mentioned to this point represent a very small subset of all the responsibilities required of human service staff to ensure person-centered outcomes are attained by agency consumers. By its very nature, person-centered planning results in an almost infinite set of expected job duties of staff. Person-centered planning focuses on outcomes desired by each individual consumer and the consumer's family, which requires highly individualized and varied support functions of staff. The types of work duties required of staff are especially numerous and varied for staff who work with large numbers of consumers in a given agency.

Because of the potentially endless variety of job duties expected of staff to ensure that person-centered plans are successfully implemented for each consumer with whom staff work and interact, it can

be somewhat impractical to attempt to precisely specify all of staffs' job duties. Once consumer outcomes have been determined for a given group of consumers, the following guidelines offer direction for determining the most important areas of staff work responsibilities that should be a priority for job specification.

Specify Job Duties Most Directly Associated With Highest Priority Consumer Outcomes

Person-centered plans that have the greatest impact for supporting a person with a disability in attaining a desired, valued lifestyle typically designate which outcomes in the plan are most important for the consumer. For example, a person-centered support team may determine that if a consumer can change her place of residence to a location that allows frequent interactions with her sister, then her life enjoyment will be enhanced noticeably. The support team may also believe that residing closer to the consumer's sister is likely to facilitate attainment of other leisure and vocational outcomes identified in the consumer's plan. The latter outcomes may include increased community involvement through the support of her sister, and access to a larger group of potential friends. In another case, a support team may determine that if a consumer could obtain a job involving the consumer's interests in horticulture, then not only would the consumer be happier, but also many of the consumer's difficulties with various types of problem behavior would likely be resolved.

When person-centered plans identify desired consumer outcomes such as those just illustrated that are likely to have a highly significant and pervasive impact on a consumer's lifestyle, then the staff actions deemed necessary for supporting the consumer in attaining the designated outcomes represent a priority for job specification. Precisely determining and specifying what staff must do to ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved represent the foundation upon which all of staffs' work expectations should be based. Hence, the first guideline for determining what staff duties should be carefully articulated is to base job specification on those responsibilities that relate directly to the most important outcomes identified in person-centered plans.

Specify Job Duties That Impact Many Consumer Outcomes

Most human service agencies serve groups of individuals with

disabilities. Although person-centered planning by nature focuses on individualized consumer outcomes, frequently there are certain staff duties that impact the outcomes of many of a given agency's consumers. For example, a core value of person-centeredness is to provide necessary supports such that individuals with disabilities have control over their own lives. For many agency consumers, and particularly individuals who have severe disabilities, how staff interact with the consumers during the daily routine can have a major impact on the degree to which the consumers control their day-to-day activities. Staff often make many decisions during daily routines for consumers with severe disabilities, such as how supper is prepared, what to wear, when to get up in the morning, and what to watch on television, to name just a few. Alternatively, if staff are aware of procedures for incorporating consumer choice opportunities within the daily routine, individuals who have even the most severe disabilities can be supported in making such decisions for themselves (see **Providing Choices for People With Severe Disabilities** in the **Selected Readings** for additional information).

In the example just noted, if staff are provided with staff development activities that provide directions regarding provision of choice opportunities for people with severe disabilities, including specifically how to incorporate such opportunities within ongoing routines, then the degree to which many agency consumers lead person-centered lives can be enhanced substantially. Consequently, an important guideline for determining which job expectations should be precisely delineated for staff is to select those areas of staff work responsibilities that impact the life quality of many agency consumers. Such responsibilities may include simply how to communicate effectively and pleasantly with consumers who do not communicate in conventional means, how to ensure that consumers with severe physical disabilities that restrict mobility have frequent access to events and activities that the consumers prefer, and how to avoid events that consumers find unpleasant as part of ongoing practices within the agency. Staff responsibilities impacting many consumers may also involve more complex and less familiar responsibilities, such as securing mortgage loans for potential home buyers or submitting and monitoring paperwork for Social Security Work Incentives for potential employees. If staff are to fulfill these types of responsibilities in a manner desired by consumers, the specific per-

formances expected of staff that constitute the responsibilities must be clearly specified and corresponding staff development activities must be provided.

If the two guidelines just summarized are followed in making decisions regarding which of the numerous duties expected of human service staff should be carefully and specifically described, agencies can make major strides in setting the occasion for consumers to experience the outcomes they desire. It is of course most desirable that *all* consumer outcomes identified in person-centered plans be accompanied by precise specification of staff work duties necessary to support consumers in attaining the outcomes. However, what is desired and what represents practical reality in the operation of many human service agencies are not always synonymous. Agency management and staff should strive to carefully specify all staff work responsibilities necessary for implementing person-centered plans but when such is not immediately possible, the two guidelines just noted can be helpful for moving agencies further along the continuum from being systems-centered to being person-centered.

Priorities for determining which staff work responsibilities should be precisely described as specific performance duties include those responsibilities necessary for supporting individual consumers in attaining their most important outcomes, and those responsibilities affecting the life quality of many consumers on a daily basis

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Determining Responsibility for Specifying Staff Work Duties

If human service agencies are to ensure that important staff duties for supporting consumers in attaining person-centered outcomes are clearly specified, then certain personnel within the agencies must be charged with the responsibility of providing such specification. How agencies determine who has the identified responsibility of ensuring that job expectations of agency staff are clearly specified should be based on the existing organizational structure of each agency, as well as the available personnel and resources within each agency. Generally though, the responsibility for job specification should include three groups of people associated with a respective agency.

From a strict management standpoint, the primary responsibility for ensuring that performance duties are carefully specified so staff

know exactly what is expected of them on a day-to-day basis rests with agency leaders, managers and supervisors. Agency leaders and supervisory personnel by definition are responsible for directing the operation of their agency. In turn, an essential component of successfully managing a human service agency is taking the necessary steps to ensure all agency staff know what duties they are expected to perform. If the agency is to function in a person-centered manner however, that responsibility should also be shared with other people associated with the agency.

For true person-centeredness, management responsibility for ensuring that staff are thoroughly aware of specific job duties should be shared with each consumer's support team. Involving individual support teams in the determination of necessary staff actions for supporting consumers in attaining outcomes identified in person-centered plans is usually an expected role of facilitators of person-centered planning meetings. As described in preceding chapters, facilitators should ensure that the delineation of relevant staff actions is a part of the team planning process.

Although facilitators of person-centered team meetings are expected to take the lead in ensuring that staff actions are carefully specified for supporting consumers in attaining desired outcomes, meeting facilitators should not own the process entirely. Rather, the process should be a participative undertaking among all members of the support team, including consumers and their families, friends, agency staff and participating community members. How much each support team member participates in the process should be a function of the interest, skills and commitment of each respective team member. Additional information regarding the degree to which given team members, and particularly agency staff, should assume the responsibility for specifying staff job responsibilities is provided in the concluding section of this chapter.

The responsibility for specifying staff job expectations as explicit performance duties should be shared among agency management and members of consumer support teams

Case Study #1: Bloomfield

(Continued from Chapter 5)

At the follow-up training session, each team shared their experiences with the use of mapping. Every team agreed that the assignment was useful, both in assisting them to learn more about a specific consumer and in bringing the consumer and family more actively into the assessment and IHP planning process. However, most teams also agreed on some common difficulties: extra time was needed to contact family members and friends to encourage them to attend a new type of meeting, extra time was needed to prepare the consumer, and it was difficult to keep consumers with limited verbal abilities involved and at the center of their meetings. Several teams also noted difficulty in maintaining a future-orientation and visionary approach. "How can we let go of the facts?" commented one direct care worker. "There are no transportation options and there are very few jobs for people in our community!". Some teams agreed that they needed to reconvene their teams and continue the assessment process. "I am not really sure that this map reflects Phillip's preferences — it may be more representative of this team's preferences!" commented another direct care worker. Another noted that because the consumer had limited leisure experiences, the team needed to assess the consumer's preferences for some novel leisure experiences to better determine her interests.

The teams spent some time discussing these difficulties and problem-solved some strategies to use to address them in the future with these 25 as well as other residents. Among the strategies agreed upon by Bloomfield as a necessary agency step was the development of a stronger linkage between Bloomfield and the state vocational rehabilitation system and the local chamber of commerce. Bloomfield staff also agreed that more explicit delineation of staff duties would assist with the time needed to convene and hold the meetings in which mapping was conducted. Both of these suggestions were shared with the Steering Committee for their attention.

Procedures For Specifying Staff Performance Responsibilities As Discrete Job Duties

There are two primary characteristics of person-centered support teams that have implications for the specification of staff performance responsibilities. First, staff performance responsibilities are driven by the desired outcomes of consumers in contrast to being driven by traditional agency job descriptions. Second, person-centered support teams include nontraditional members such as family, friends, co-workers, church members and neighbors of the consumers. These team members bring new and often untapped resources to the planning process. Thus, person-centered support teams often find a table such as the one illustrated in **Chapter 4** useful to identify team member actions necessary to accomplish desired consumer outcomes. Once this or a similar listing of desired consumer outcomes and necessary team member actions has been generated, the next step is to determine what team member competencies are in place and how team member responsibilities should be assigned. Unlike traditional, more system-centered teams, person-centered support teams do not rely on paid staff to assume all needed actions.

A variety of procedures exist for assisting agency management and support team members in specifying performance responsibilities as discrete job duties of staff. Determining which procedure to use in a particular situation depends in large part on the skills and work experiences of staff who are expected to carry out the duties. Rather detailed job specification is often required to ensure that new and less-experienced staff are fully aware of what is expected of them on the job. In contrast, for staff who are already well-experienced and skilled in performing job duties associated with implementing person-centered plans, relatively minimal job specification is usually needed.

The degree to which various performance expectations require specification into discrete job duties is also dependent on the nature of the expectations. Some expectations resulting from person-centered plans require only a simple statement as to what is expected such as, for example, securing a means of public transportation for a consumer to attend a desired social function on a regular basis. In many other cases though, staff may be expected to perform certain duties that require many involved and complex actions or skills. To

illustrate, a new job responsibility may be to systematically fade the amount of instructional support that staff currently provide to a consumer on a community job such that the consumer can eventually work on the job without the frequent presence of a job coach. Many staff may not be familiar with the technical aspects of fading instructional support. For those job duties that require a number of involved actions or steps, job expectations can be clearly specified through the use of *task analyses* and *performance checklists*.

Using Task Analyses and Performance Checklists to Specify Staff Work Duties

Task analyses and performance checklists represent means of breaking performance responsibilities and duties into discrete behaviors or action steps for staff and other support team members to perform. By breaking respective job duties into component action steps, task analyses and performance checklists provide a type of behavioral job map for staff to follow in fulfilling various work responsibilities. These tools make it very clear what must be done to complete a work assignment. Task analyses and performance checklists are an important component of staff training programs designed to teach staff how to perform designated work duties that relate to implementing person-centered plans. A detailed description of these tools is provided in the following chapter that focuses on staff training (**Chapter 7**).

Specifying Performance Responsibilities by Increasing Job Structure

One valuable means of specifying performance responsibilities for maximizing the likelihood that staff are fully informed of expected work duties is by *increasing job structure*. Whereas task analyses and performance checklists specify exactly what must be done by staff to fulfill a given work responsibility, increasing job structure specifies not only what must be done, but also where the work should occur, at what time, and for how long. To illustrate, with the example noted earlier concerning support staff embedding choices within the daily routine of consumers with very severe disabilities, increasing the job structure would involve informing staff specifically which times of the day and which routines were opportune for providing consumers with meaningful choices (e.g., during meal and snack times, leisure

times), as well as precisely how and where to provide the choices for each consumer during the routines.

In an absolute sense, the entire daily job of selected staff in a human service agency could be precisely structured. Such an approach though is usually counterproductive. From a practical perspective, carefully structuring the entire job of respective staff would be a very time consuming process for whomever was charged with specifying the daily job structure. As indicated in the following chapter section, too much structure also can make the job situation undesirable for many staff and thereby detract from staffs' quality of work life as well as work motivation. It is generally recommended that heavily structuring staff job responsibilities be reserved for those duties that are most germane for implementing the most important aspects of person-centered consumer plans. Additional guidelines for determining situations in which work duties should be heavily structured are provided in the following paragraphs.

Determining How Much to Specify about Job Responsibilities

As indicated in preceding chapter sections, the degree to which job responsibilities should be specified for human service staff depends on a number of variables. The nature of the job task as well as the experience and skills of respective staff are primary issues to consider in this regard. The apparent work ethic and concern for performing quality work among various staff is likewise important. Generally, staff who appear highly motivated to fulfill their duties proficiently require less specification of job responsibilities for promoting quality work performance relative to those staff who appear to lack adequate motivation.

Another relevant variable affecting how much agency time and resources should be directed to specifying staff job responsibilities is how much staff like or dislike highly detailed instructions for performing work duties. Some staff prefer to have their work duties very carefully spelled out by supervisory and related personnel. Other staff prefer simply to be informed only of the desired work outcome, and then be allowed to determine the best means of attaining that outcome themselves. Because of individualized preferences for job specification across staff, managers and team meeting facilitators should be observant of the degree to which different staff like or dislike having their work expectations precisely specified.

One useful guideline for providing job specification for different agency staff (as well as other support team members) is to initially provide only as much information that is deemed by respective staff to be necessary to complete the job satisfactorily, as well as only as much detail as staff desire to receive. If given staff persons do not successfully fulfill work duties with such a level of job specification, then increased specification can subsequently be provided. Subsequent increases in job specification can help staff improve their performance proficiency if the problems with work completion were due at least in part to insufficient information regarding how to complete the work.

Increasing the amount of job specification in the manner just described can also facilitate the task of a manager or supervisor in terms of responding to staffs' work to either support and maintain quality work or alternatively, to correct and improve unacceptable work. Increasing job specification has a facilitating effect on supporting or correcting work because the specification makes it very clear to all concerned parties whether or not the work is being completed satisfactorily. Specific supervisory strategies for responding to staff work performance in ways that either support and maintain quality work or correct inadequate work are presented in **Chapters 10** and **11**, respectively.

Case Study #2: Working Concepts

(Continued from Chapter 5)

Working Concepts staff were very pleased with their initial efforts. They received lots of positive feedback from potential employees and families about the new assessment process and the staff felt that the mapping process yielded information about potential employees that had not been addressed by more traditional methods. Families and staff also agreed that potential employees were more involved in the assessment process, expressing more of their preferences and dislikes, setting more future-oriented goals and thinking more creatively about vocational skills and aptitudes.

One afternoon, a job developer excitedly made a telephone call to Richard, one of the potential employees. Richard had expressed a very specific job preference at a very specific place of business. Richard dreamed of working for the state Wildlife and Fisheries agency, but because he had no job experience, he expressed a short-term dream of working as a salesman in a sports store near his home. The job developer told Richard that she had found a job for him at the sports store where he wanted to work, that the job could begin as soon as Richard was ready, and also that the job was a stock position. Richard became very quiet and finally said, "I will have to talk to my mother." The next day Richard called the job developer back and said that he did not want the job. His mother prompted him to say why he would not accept the job. Richard reminded the job developer that when he prepared his vocational preferences map, he noted that the only job he would not consider was a stock position. He further explained that this was because most warehouses were very hot and he experienced an adverse reaction to heat as a result of his medication. The job developer listened and reminded Richard that he could become a salesperson once he proved himself and a salesperson position became available. Richard spoke forcibly for the first time, "But you asked me what I wanted to do and I said I wanted to be a salesperson!".

The job developer went to Mr. Millington's office in frustration. After listening to the story, Mr. Millington suggested that if she really wanted to be person-centered in her job development activities, she needed to respect a potential employee's preferences and decisions. Resignedly, the job developer telephoned the employer and explained the reason Richard would not accept the stock person position. She listened in surprise as the employer said, "Maybe I could make an exception to our policy since Richard really wants to work for my company." Richard began working as a salesman at the store one week later.

A Bottom-Line Criterion for Job Specification

In **Chapter 5** it was emphasized that a basic criterion for determining the degree to which consumer outcomes identified in person-centered plans need to be specified is that a consensus must be reached by support team members that it will be readily apparent when the outcomes are or are not attained. Essentially the same criterion is relevant when considering how much specificity should be included when describing action steps for staff and other support team members to follow in order to implement person-centered plans. It must be clearly apparent to everybody involved with implementation of a given plan that necessary actions to support consumers in attaining a designated outcome have been fulfilled.

In many cases, the bottom-line criterion for job specificity just presented can be fulfilled by observing that a certain consumer outcome has been attained. In this manner it is generally quite apparent that staff and related team members have sufficiently fulfilled their responsibilities in supporting the consumer and implementing the consumer's plan. Conversely, when specific consumer outcomes have not been attained after a reasonable time period, a closer examination of the degree to which action steps have been specified is warranted. Evaluating whether action steps expected of staff and other team members have been sufficiently articulated to provide necessary information about job expectations represents one important means of determining, and correcting, unsuccessful implementation of consumer support plans.

Chapter 7

Training Quality Work Skills among Staff in Person-Centered Organizations

If human service agencies are to provide quality supports and services to assist consumers in attaining their person-centered goals, then agency staff must have the skills to perform their work duties in a competent manner. A well-skilled work force is the foundation for any quality organization, including human service agencies adopting a person-centered way of doing business. An essential requirement for ensuring that human service personnel have the work skills to perform their duties competently is effective *staff training*.

The importance of staff training in human service agencies was noted previously. To reiterate briefly, the majority of the work force in typical human service agencies begin their jobs with minimal or no training in how to perform their work duties. Hence, agencies must train new staff members in relevant work skills. Additionally, in order to maintain quality supports and services commensurate with advances in the human service field, agency staff must be periodically retrained in new and better ways of fulfilling work responsibilities.

The rationale regarding why a good staff training program is an essential component of quality human services as just summarized pertains to basically all types of human service agencies. However, effective staff training programs are especially important for those agencies that desire to operate in a person-centered manner. Quality staff training programs are particularly important in the latter agencies for two primary reasons. First, developing sound person-centered plans with agency consumers frequently requires new knowledge and skills for human service practitioners. Such skills, including for example, facilitating effective person-centered planning meetings and developing valuable assessment maps, were illustrated in **Chapters 4** and **5.** Second, ensuring that the outcomes and desires identified through person-centered plans are actually realized by consumers requires human service staff to adopt new values and perform a variety of new, often non-traditional, duties on a day-to-day basis — values and duties with which many staff have little or no familiarity. The latter expectations may involve such activities as

supporting a consumer in obtaining an affordable housing loan, conducting systematic leisure preference assessments with a consumer, and assisting a consumer in interviewing potential apartment mates, to name just a few. To ensure that these types of work duties are completed satisfactorily, agency staff often require training in a number of performance areas.

From an outcome management standpoint, being able to carry out agency functions necessary to develop and realize the goals of person-centered plans requires specific *verbal* skills and *performance* skills on the part of human service personnel. Verbal skills pertain to knowledge about the values and procedures related to person-centered planning. **Chapter 4** reviewed methods of training staff in this important knowledge base. Performance skills pertain primarily to those work duties staff must perform to implement person-centered plans in order to ensure that agency consumers achieve their desired outcomes.

Developing proficient performance skills represents the primary objective of staff training as part of an outcome management approach to operating human service agencies. Ensuring that staff have the skills to perform jobs proficiently receives so much importance in outcome management because *how* staff perform support duties is one of the most critical and often overlooked variables affecting the quality of supports that agency consumers receive. In short, knowledge or verbal skills alone are not sufficient; if staff do not also have the skills to perform their work duties in a quality manner, then agency consumers do not receive quality supports and services. In turn, without quality supports and services, human service agencies are unlikely to fulfill the intended mission of ensuring that agency consumers attain person-centered outcomes.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe a means of training performance skills to staff such that staff can perform work duties in a competent manner within the requirements of person-centered organizations. The staff training procedures to be described are based on over 25 years of applied research on training important work skills to human service personnel. Such research has lead to a very effective technology of staff training.

The Technology of Staff Training

The technology comprising a successful program for training

performance skills to human service staff essentially involves five basic steps. Each step, as described in the following sections, should be completed in sequence by a staff trainer when teaching job performance skills to staff.

Staff Training Step 1: Specify Work Skills to be Trained that are Related to Desired Consumer Outcomes

The first step in successfully training performance skills to staff involves specifying the skills that are to be trained. Specification of staff work skills means that the precise performances in which staff are expected to engage are clearly delineated. Often specification of work skills involves *task analyzing* the performance area of concern, in essentially the same way that various skills are task analyzed to be taught to students with disabilities in educational settings. For example, if the desired work skill to be trained to staff pertains to providing a toddler with severe disabilities in a preschool a choice of toys during classroom play time, the following task analysis might be used. The illustrated task analysis is designed for presenting a choice of toys for a young child, Keisha, who lacks conventional communication skills for expressing a choice, and who has limited mobility due to physical disabilities.

SAMPLE TASK ANALYSIS USED TO TRAIN DIRECT SUPPORT STAFF TO PRESENT A CHOICE OF PLAY ITEMS FOR A YOUNG CHILD WHO HAS SEVERE MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

Desired consumer outcome: Keisha will choose a preferred toy when staff provide her with a selection of her favorite toys

Step #	Performance Description
1	**Select at least two alternative toys to present to Keisha**
2	**Present the selected toys in view of, and within reach of Keisha (e. g., on her wheelchair tray top)**
3	**Ask Keisha to choose a toy (e.g., "Keisha, which toy do you want?")**
4	**If Keisha points to, reaches for, or otherwise indicates a desire for one of the toys, leave that toy with her and remove remaining items**
5	**If Keisha does not indicate a desire for a presented toy as described above, remove the toys**
6	**Repeat the process with alternative toys until Keisha indicates a desire for a given toy**

Task analyses of respective work skills expected of staff are particularly useful when a number of steps must be implemented in an exact sequence in order for the skill area to be performed correctly. In cases in which a number of activities must be completed but the activities do not necessarily have to occur in a particular sequence, *checklists* of the desired performances represent a useful way of specifying work skills to be taught to staff. The following illustration presents a checklist that has been used to determine how to reduce the amount of job coach assistance provided to workers in a supported work situation. The checklist guides a staff member through the process of evaluating each step of a respective work task to determine if the amount of job coach assistance can be reduced or eliminated from each step. Using the checklist, the staff member

reviews each step of the task to evaluate whether teaching the worker additional skills, altering the work step through environmental re-arrangement (e.g., through use of adaptive equipment) to make the step easier for the worker to perform, or both processes could result in reduced assistance. The intent in using the checklist is to facilitate a staff member's role of helping a worker with significant disabilities to become more independent in a work situation.

SAMPLE CHECKLIST USED TO TRAIN STAFF HOW TO EVALUATE A SUPPORTED WORK TASK TO DETERMINE MEANS OF REDUCING JOB COACH SUPPORT PROVIDED TO THE WORKER

Desired consumer outcome: Luis will prepare advertising fliers for mailing with twice weekly job coach support

Performance requirement	Date completed
1. List each step necessary to complete the target work task	_____
2. Observe worker perform each step listed in the task and record whether job coach assistance is provided to the worker for each step	_____
3. For each work step requiring job coach assistance, determine in conjunction with employee, co-workers and job coach for which steps the assistance could be reduced through environmental re-arrangement or work jigs	_____
4. After #3 above, determine in conjunction with employee, co-workers and job coach for which of the remaining steps job coach assistance could be reduced by teaching the worker additional skills	_____
5. Make the environmental re-arrangements corresponding to #3 above	_____
6. Initiate the teaching process corresponding to #4 above	_____
7. Collect performance and productivity data to ensure expected work standards continue to be met	_____
8. Discuss and reach agreement on entire plan with all involved parties (e.g., vocational rehabilitation counselor, long-term support provider)	_____

Specification of work skills in a task analysis or performance checklist has a number of advantages as a component step of successful staff training. The major advantage is that specifying the exact performances expected of staff facilitates the remainder of the training process. Such specification also facilitates evaluation of the degree to which the staff training process has been successful in training staff how to perform the targeted work skill. How specification of work skills enhances these aspects of the staff training process will be illustrated in the description of the remaining steps in the staff training technology.

In somewhat of a contrast to the advantages just indicated, there

is also a noticeable disadvantage of specifying the precise performances expected of staff as part of the staff training protocol — the process can require a relatively considerable time investment to initially specify the performance areas that need to be taught to staff. However, the initial time investment is usually beneficial in that over the long run, the time spent specifying job duties within a task analysis or checklist format can save time later. Because specification of staff work skills usually enhances the success of staff training endeavors, such an undertaking reduces the amount of subsequent time required to retrain staff and to correct nonproficient staff performance. Also, depending on the existing knowledge base and skills of the staff trainees, the performance skills to be trained do not always have to be *precisely* specified. In some cases, simply listing the general work steps to be accomplished in a checklist format can suffice to allow training to proceed successfully. The following illustration provides an example of this type of a more general checklist that has been used to help staff determine how to assist a consumer, Tyrone, in purchasing a desired home using a person-centered process.

SAMPLE CHECKLIST USED TO HELP SUPPORT STAFF DETERMINE HOW TO ASSIST A CONSUMER IN PURCHASING A HOME

Desired consumer outcome: Tyrone will own a home in the neighborhood of his choice

Step	Date Completed	Comments
Establish support team		
Develop housing vision		
Develop action plan		
Schedule team meetings		
Develop savings plan		
Develop budget		
Complete pre-qualifying		
Attend home buyer training		
Select buyers agent		
View houses		
Select house		
File purchase agreement		
Finalize financing		
Complete act of sale		
Celebrate!		
Move into new home		
Develop new support plan (for home ownership)		

Staff Training Step 2: Provide Written Description of Work Skills

After the work skills to be taught to staff have been carefully specified, then the actual training activities with staff can be initiated. The next step in this regard is to provide a written description of the specified work skills to staff. The written description should be limited to the actual performances that are to be completed and should be prepared in a succinct format such that the trainees' attention is directed to the performances in contrast to other, miscellaneous information. If the performance areas to be taught have been specified within a task analysis or checklist as described under **Step 1**, then providing a written description simply entails giving a copy of the task analysis or checklist to each staff trainee.

The purpose of providing staff trainees with a written description of the work skills to be taught is to inform staff what is expected as well as to obtain their feedback about skills for which they may need special support. An additional purpose is to provide each trainee with a *permanent* source of information regarding a respective job expectation. The written task analysis or performance checklist can be maintained by the trainee and reviewed as needed if the trainee forgets or otherwise becomes unsure how to complete a new job task. It should be noted, however, that providing a written description of a job task only sets the occasion for assisting staff trainees in remembering how to perform the designated task. In order to fulfill this function, the description must be reviewed by trainees, and not all trainees will refer to the description during the course of their daily work routine. Nevertheless, for those trainees who are sincerely concerned about performing a work duty proficiently, the written description can be a beneficial source of assistance.

Staff Training Step 3: Provide Verbal Description of Work Skills

Once staff trainees have had the opportunity to read the written description of the work skills which they will be expected to acquire and perform, the next step in an outcome management approach to staff training is for the staff trainer to verbally describe the specific performances comprising the skills. The verbal description covers the same information provided in the written summary of the work skills. The verbal description is provided in addition to the written description of the job task for three reasons. First, some staff members may

not read very proficiently, such that the written summaries may not be particularly helpful. Second, even with adequate reading skills, some staff persons comprehend information spoken to them more easily than information which they read. Third, providing a verbal description of the target work skills affords staff persons the opportunity to ask questions and clear up any misunderstandings or uncertainties they may have regarding the new work skills.

An additional benefit of providing a verbal description of the work skills staff are expected to acquire is that the description provides an opportunity for the staff trainer to discuss the rationale regarding why the skills are to be taught to staff. The rationale should include how the designated duties relate to consumers attaining outcomes identified in their person-centered plans. Presenting the rationale regarding why staff will be expected to perform certain skills is a crucial step for enhancing staffs' acceptance of the training process, as well as acceptance of the new work expectations. As indicated in **Chapter 3**, all procedures encompassed within an outcome management approach — and particularly when outcome management is applied within an agency attempting to function in a person-centered manner — should be conducted in a way that attempts to maximize staff acceptance of the procedures. Concern for staff acceptance of management actions, such as that reflected in taking the time to let staff know why they are expected to learn new work skills, is frequently lacking in many human service agencies. The importance of staff acceptance of management actions as a critical component of operating an agency in a person-centered manner cannot be over emphasized.

Staff Training Step 4: Demonstrate The Work Skills To Be Taught

The fourth step in an outcome management, staff training program is for the staff trainer to demonstrate how the new work skills should be performed while the staff trainees observe the demonstration. Depending on the situation in which the staff training is conducted (see later chapter section on **Classroom-Based Versus On-The-Job Training**), the demonstration may involve a role-play activity or on-the-job demonstration as part of ongoing job duties. With both demonstration formats it is critical that the staff trainer perform the job skill in the exact manner that the skill is presented on the written description of the job duty, as well as in the same manner

in which the duty was verbally described to staff. The intent is for staff trainees to have the opportunity to read about how to perform their new job task, hear about how to perform the task and see how the task is performed. Providing information about new work skills in this multi-format manner maximizes the likelihood that staff trainees will thoroughly understand their new job expectations.

Effective training of job performance skills ensures staff trainees *read* how to perform the job task, *hear* about how to perform the task, and *see* how to perform the task

Staff Training Step 5: Practice and Feedback

The staff training steps described to this point basically set the occasion for staff to learn how to perform a new job skill. The critical step for *ensuring* that staff learn to perform the skill is the fifth and final step in the staff training technology: practice and feedback. After staff have read, heard and observed how to perform the job duty of concern, each staff trainee should practice performing the duty while the staff trainer observes. Subsequently, the staff trainer should provide feedback regarding each staff person's proficiency in performing the job task.

As with the preceding training step involving the staff trainer's demonstration of the new work skill, trainees may practice performing the job task in a role-play situation or as part of the regular job routine. Regardless, the practice must be immediately followed by feedback from the staff trainer that is *diagnostic* in nature. Diagnostic feedback entails informing the trainee what s/he did correctly during the practice routine as well as informing the trainee if any aspects of the job task were not performed accurately. If any part of the job was not performed correctly, then the feedback should also include information regarding how the specific part of the task should have been performed.

Diagnostic feedback within a staff training context informs a staff trainee what was performed correctly with a target work task, what was performed incorrectly and precisely how the latter performance can be corrected

Providing feedback that is diagnostic in nature is critical for ensuring that staff learn to perform a new job task proficiently. To

provide such feedback, the staff trainer must observe the practice session carefully in order to determine what respective trainees do proficiently and nonproficiently. Subsequently, the feedback provided to each trainee must be highly specific if it is to help the trainee perform the skill consistently and accurately. To help ensure that staff trainers provide feedback that is truly diagnostic and helpful, it is useful if trainers follow a specific protocol for providing the feedback. The following 7-step protocol has been researched within a number of staff training applications and found to be most helpful for ensuring that staff trainers provide useful, diagnostic feedback that results in staff trainees learning how to perform important job skills.

PROTOCOL FOR PROVIDING DIAGNOSTIC FEEDBACK WHILE TRAINING STAFF TO PERFORM A NEW WORK SKILL

1. **Begin feedback session with a positive statement regarding the overall practice session**
2. **Commend steps of the job task that the trainee performed correctly**
3. **Describe each step of the job task that the trainee performed incorrectly (if any steps were performed incorrectly)**
4. **Describe how each step performed incorrectly should have been performed**
5. **Solicit questions from the trainee to ensure understanding and promote agreement in performing the desired activity**
6. **Describe what will happen next in the training process (e.g., additional practice, scheduling the next observation and feedback session)**
7. **End the feedback session with a positive statement about the trainee's performance or effort**

When staff trainers follow the feedback protocol just described, staff trainees receive valuable information about how to perform the

new job skill as well as how to improve their performance if necessary. Steps 2 - 4 of the protocol are particularly useful in assisting trainees in performing the task proficiently. The other steps in the feedback protocol also help ensure that the feedback session leads to satisfactory job performance but in a more indirect manner. Step 5, in which questions are solicited from the trainee, allows the trainee to have input into the evaluation and improvement process regarding the trainee's future work performance. Such input can facilitate understanding of the trainer's information provided in Steps 2 - 4. Step 6 in the protocol is designed to inform the trainee whether the training process has been successfully completed or whether additional practice sessions are necessary to bring about more satisfactory performance.

Steps 1 and 7 in the feedback protocol are designed specifically to make the feedback session pleasant for the trainee. As will be discussed in **Chapter 9**, having one's work performance observed — which is a necessary part of the staff training technology — is often an uncomfortable or otherwise unpleasant experience for many persons. By beginning the feedback session (which occurs immediately after the trainee's practice is observed) with an overall positive statement and then ending the session with another positive statement, the staff trainer can reduce the likelihood that the experience is unpleasant for the trainee.

Although all of the steps of the staff training technology as summarized in preceding paragraphs represent important components of effective training of job performance skills, the practice and feedback step is the most important. This step should be repeated until each trainee is observed to perform the targeted job task correctly. Staff trainers should never be satisfied that they have successfully trained staff in a new job skill until they observe staff perform the skill correctly. When and only when staff have been observed to perform a skill correctly can the staff training program be considered successful.

SUCCESSFUL TRAINING OF PERFORMANCE SKILLS INVOLVES:

1. **Specifying the work skills to be taught and relating the skills to desired consumer outcomes**
2. **Providing staff with a written description of the skills**
3. **Verbally describing the skills to staff**
4. **Demonstrating how the skills should be performed**
5. **Staff practicing the skills with diagnostic feedback *until staff are observed performing the skills proficiently***

Special Considerations for Enhancing the Effectiveness Of the Staff Training Technology

As indicated in the introductory comments to this chapter, the technology for training performance skills to staff as just reviewed has been shown repeatedly through research and application to result in staff acquisition of the work skills necessary to complete their jobs in a proficient manner. The research has also denoted several special considerations that can maximize the effectiveness of the training technology. One such consideration pertains to the qualifications of the person(s) charged with the responsibility of training staff in new work skills. The other consideration involves the environment in which staff training is conducted.

Necessary Qualifications of Persons Charged With Training New Work Skills To Agency Staff

Ensuring Staff Trainers Can Perform the Skills They are Expected to Teach To Staff. Just as the types of personnel who have the designated responsibility for providing staff with knowledge concerning person-centered values and practices vary across different human service agencies, so do the personnel who have responsibility for training new performance skills. In larger agencies, individuals assigned to a staff development or related unit of the agency often are assigned the bulk of staff training responsibilities. In smaller agencies, different persons share various staff training duties.

Clinical personnel such as psychologists, teachers, physical therapists, etc., often have the responsibility of training direct support personnel how to implement various clinical procedures with consumers. Supervisors of direct support personnel likewise are frequently responsible for training staff in a myriad of day-to-day duties with which such personnel are often charged. Agency executives and consultants also are involved in staff training endeavors from time to time.

Regardless of who is assigned the responsibility of training new work skills to staff, it is crucial that the training personnel have certain skills themselves. Most apparently, staff training personnel must be able to perform the work skills that they are attempting to train to staff. A key component of the technology of staff training is demonstration of the targeted work skills. If staff trainers are to adequately demonstrate the work skills for staff trainees, it is of course necessary for the trainers to know how to perform the task in order to provide the demonstration. Indicating that staff trainers must be proficient in performing the work duties that they are training to staff may appear to be asserting the obvious. However, it is relatively common to find staff trainers in various agencies that in fact are not competent in performing what they are expected to train others to perform.

Problems with staff trainers not having the skills that they are attempting to teach to staff generally exist in three types of situations. The first situation pertains to agencies in which one or a few persons are given most or all of the staff training responsibilities. Because there are many varied skills required of human service staff to function proficiently in a person-centered agency, it is unrealistic to expect that a small number of people (e.g., persons in a designated staff development department) will possess all of the skills that the remainder of the agency's staff is expected to perform. In such situations it is incumbent upon the staff training personnel to seek, with appropriate administrative support, other persons to help conduct the staff training who are well-skilled in performing the job tasks themselves.

If designated staff trainers do not seek the assistance of other persons in the type of situation just referred to, three undesirable outcomes are likely to occur with staff training endeavors. The first and most apparent outcome is that the staff trainees who participate in the training will not learn how to perform the designated work skills — the staff training will not be effective. The second undesirable outcome is less apparent but nevertheless significant. Specifically,

trainees participating in the training typically become aware quite quickly that their trainer is not competent in doing what the trainer is instructing the staff to perform. Consequently, staff tend to lose respect for the staff trainer, which often carries over to a loss of respect for the agency executives who are requiring the training. Diminished respect for agency executives and the activities they require of staff can lead to a negative impact on staff morale and the overall functioning of the agency. The third, and related, result is that staff trainees tend to perceive the consumer outcomes desired to occur as a function of staffs' implementation of the new work skill as unattainable because no one can demonstrate for staff how to successfully support the consumers in attaining the respective outcomes.

The scenario just described can be particularly problematic when introducing person-centered planning within an agency. It is critical that whomever is charged with training staff in person-centered values and practices be very knowledgeable and experienced in all aspects of person-centered planning. Otherwise, the staff trainer will be unable to adequately address the many questions that can arise among staff regarding perceived practical limitations and barriers to changing to a person-centered way of doing business. When the staff trainer who is presenting person-centered planning cannot adequately respond to concerns raised by staff, the staff tend to discredit the trainer as well as the trainer's message — in this case the benefits of person-centered planning. It can be easy to see in such a case how the message shared with staff becomes one of "We tried person-centered planning and it didn't work" or "Our consumers have unrealistic dreams".

The second situation in which individuals charged with staff training responsibilities do not always possess the skills that they are expected to teach to staff involves supervisors of direct support personnel. Supervisory personnel such as group home managers, supervisors in vocational centers, and residential treatment supervisors are often expected to train direct support staff in new developments in the professional field, including how to support agency consumers in a person-centered manner. However, the supervisors themselves frequently are not trained in the new developments beyond a cursory verbal presentation of the new expectations. Unless agency executives provide adequate opportunities for the supervisors themselves to receive adequate training in new developments,

such as through exposure to the staff training technology described in this chapter, the supervisors should not be expected to train their staff in the new developments.

A third situation that can arise in which personnel charged with staff training responsibilities lack the skills that they are attempting to teach to staff pertains to certain professional personnel. As referred to here, the term "professional" refers to an individual who has had extensive, formal training in a respective human service profession. In some cases the training various professionals receive is almost exclusively classroom-based or academic in nature. Such academic training, regardless of how extensive, does not necessarily translate into competent skills during hands-on applications with people who have developmental and related disabilities. Relatedly, skills in *writing* various clinical programs does not does necessarily equate to skills in *implementing* programs.

Regardless of the extent of one's professional background and training, if the professional does not have competent skills in carrying out clinically-related procedures with consumers then that individual is not very likely to train agency staff to carry out the procedures effectively. All of the problems already noted that exist with expecting staff training personnel to train new work skills to agency staff that the training personnel themselves cannot perform can also apply in the situation of note here involving professional personnel as staff trainers. An additional problem that often arises in the latter situation is that *what* professionals attempt to teach direct support personnel to perform is not very realistic in light of the various demands on staffs' time in the work place. Hence, before a respective professional is given the assignment of training staff in a respective clinical procedure, it is wise to have observed the professional competently conduct the procedure him/herself during typical working conditions within the agency.

Training performance skills can be successful only if training instructors can perform the skills that they are attempting to teach staff to perform

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Ensuring Staff Trainers Are Skilled in the Technology of Staff Training. Not only is it necessary that staff trainers possess the work skills that they are attempting to teach to agency staff, it is also

necessary for trainers to know *how* to teach those skills to staff. Staff training personnel must be skilled in the technology of staff training if such training is to be consistently effective.

The technology of staff training as described in this chapter is relatively straightforward. However, a quick review of staff training programs in many human service agencies reveals that much of the usual training consists of bringing a group of staff together for a lecture or presentation on a new type of clinical procedure or expected work responsibility. Such a process can be useful for teaching verbal knowledge and skills but is rarely effective in teaching performance skills. As described previously, staff training should never be considered successful until the trainees participating in the training are observed to apply the new work skills proficiently. As illustrated in **Chapter 4**, a training format based exclusively on lecture or verbal presentation does not allow for such an observation. In contrast, following the steps comprising the technology of staff training summarized in this chapter and the principles of adult learning summarized in **Chapter 4** requires the observation of staff competence in performing the skills of concern.

Work Situations Conducive to Effective Staff Training: Classroom-Based Versus On-The-Job Training

The settings in which staff training typically occurs in human service agencies vary along a continuum. On one end of the continuum, the training occurs totally in the routine work setting in which staff are expected to apply the work skills being taught. On the other end of the continuum, training occurs exclusively in a classroom-type setting that is separate from the regular work environment. Between these two ends of the continuum, training occurs in part in the regular job environment and in part in a classroom.

On-the-job training and classroom-based training each have respective advantages and disadvantages. The primary advantage of on-the-job training is that the trainees have the opportunity to practice the new work skills under the exact conditions in which they will be expected to apply the skills during the regular job routine. Relatedly, the staff trainer can observe the trainees perform the skills being taught in the situation in which the trainees will be expected to apply the skills, thereby ensuring that the trainees have truly mastered the work skills of concern.

The primary disadvantage of on-the-job training is that typically, training in the regular work environment can occur with only one trainee or a very small group of trainees at a time. Hence, such training requires more time on the part of the staff trainer relative to working with a large group of trainees simultaneously. On-the-job training can also have the disadvantage of disrupting routine work activities of staff as well as ongoing activities of consumers.

The advantages and disadvantages of classroom-based training generally represent a reverse image of those of on-the-job training. The primary advantage of classroom-based training is that the training can occur with relatively large groups of trainees at one time. The main disadvantage is that trainees never have the chance to practice the new work skills under the staff trainer's supervision in the regular work environment in which the skills are expected to be applied. Even if the trainees practice the new skills in a role-play situation in the classroom, it is not certain that the trainees will be able to perform the job skills proficiently within the varying conditions in the regular work setting.

Currently some controversy exists over the degree to which staff training should occur in classroom settings versus in the regular work environment of agency staff. In actuality, it really does not matter how much training occurs in the two types of settings provided the basic criterion is met as noted previously for considering training to be completed: training is not considered complete until the staff trainer observes each trainee perform the targeted work skills proficiently and desired consumer outcomes are attained. Most preferably, the staff trainer would observe each trainee perform the new work skills satisfactorily in the regular work setting in which respective trainees will be expected to apply the skills as part of the routine job. When considering the latter condition, it becomes clear that at least some part of staff training needs to occur in the regular work environment of agency staff.

Our experience has suggested that to maximize the advantages and minimize the disadvantages of both classroom-based training and on-the-job training, a combination of both types of training can be most beneficial. It is advantageous from a time efficiency standpoint to provide the written and verbal description of the work skills being taught with a group of trainees in a classroom setting. The initial demonstration of the work skills and practice by the trainees in a

role-play situation with feedback from the trainer is also most efficiently conducted in a classroom setting with a group of trainees. Subsequently, to maximize training effectiveness, the final training step involves the staff trainer working with trainees individually to observe each trainee practice the new work skills in the regular job environment and to provide diagnostic feedback from the staff trainer. As stressed earlier, the latter training step should be repeated until each staff trainee meets the training mastery criterion. If trainees practice the new work skills in a classroom role-play situation to the point that they demonstrate proficiency with the skills in that situation, relatively little time is usually required for the trainees to subsequently demonstrate proficiency in the regular work environment.

A Note of Caution on The Utility of Staff Training in Person-Centered Organizations

The significance of good staff training programs in person-centered organizations has been noted repeatedly throughout this chapter. In short, a human service agency cannot expect to provide quality supports and services to assist consumers in attaining person-centered outcomes unless the staff providing those supports and services are well trained. However, it should also be stressed that good staff training programs in and of themselves will not guarantee quality work performance by staff. Good staff training programs only set the occasion for quality work performance.

A basic tenet of outcome management is that staff training is often *necessary* for ensuring that staff work competently, but rarely *sufficient* (see similar discussion in **Chapter 6** regarding qualifications related to specifying staff job duties). Many agencies have attempted to improve the quality of their supports and services associated with person-centered planning by investing in comprehensive staff training programs — with unsuccessful results. Comprehensive staff training programs must be followed by effective supervision of staff performance as part of an agency's routine operating procedures if the benefits of staff training are to result in quality work performance on a consistent basis. The following chapters describe effective supervisory procedures as part of an overall outcome management approach for ensuring that once staff have acquired the skills to perform their jobs through successful staff training, those skills are then used

sufficiently to produce quality supports, services and outcomes for agency consumers day in and day out.

Chapter 8

Monitoring Attainment of Person-Centered Consumer Outcomes In Human Service Agencies

A critical component of outcome management in person-centered agencies is routine monitoring of consumer outcomes and staff work performance necessary for achieving those outcomes. Without proficient monitoring procedures, there is no way to determine if human service personnel are performing their jobs in a manner that results in desired outcomes for agency consumers. Relatedly, unless valued outcomes are routinely observed among consumers who receive an agency's supports, there is no assurance that the outcomes are indeed achieved. In short, monitoring provides information to allow agency executives to determine if a human service agency is fulfilling its intended mission.

When agencies first begin to make the transition from a systems-centered approach to a more person-centered approach, monitoring consumer outcomes helps to measure progress and trouble-shoot necessary changes in programs, personnel, policies and procedures. Thus, information resulting from monitoring provides the basis for responsive and effective management in person-centered environments. If monitoring procedures indicate that consumers are not achieving person-centered outcomes at a desirable level, or that staff are not performing work duties in a competent manner, then agency management can take steps to improve agency operations. On the other hand, if monitoring procedures indicate that work performance is occurring proficiently and that consumers are routinely experiencing desired outcomes, then management can take active steps to support and maintain ongoing operations.

Systematic monitoring provides the basis for determining whether a human service agency is successfully providing the supports and services that it is intended to provide

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This chapter focuses on basic procedures for monitoring attainment of person-centered consumer outcomes in human service agencies. Procedures for monitoring staff work performance, as well as the

activities of other support team members, related to supporting consumers in attaining desired outcomes are discussed in the following chapter. A variety of monitoring procedures are described, each of which differs to a degree based on the types of outcomes desired to be monitored. However, to be successfully applied within an outcome management approach, each monitoring procedure must meet several basic criteria. These criteria, which represent the primary characteristics of successful monitoring practices for consumer attainment of person-centered outcomes and the activities of team members for supporting consumers in attaining the outcomes, are described in the next section.

Characteristics of Successful Monitoring Practices

Many human service agencies have implemented monitoring systems as a means of evaluating the effectiveness of agency supports and services. A large percentage of these agencies though have encountered serious problems with their monitoring practices. These problems, which are described in this and the subsequent chapter, have resulted in numerous agency leaders abandoning the practice of systematically monitoring and evaluating agency supports and services. However, the problems that agencies experience with procedures used to monitor consumer outcomes and related staff work performance are not inherent in the act of monitoring itself. Rather, the problems pertain to *how* monitoring procedures are implemented.

Because of the frequent problems associated with typical monitoring procedures in human service agencies, a significant amount of applied research has been reported on ways to ensure that monitoring is conducted in a successful manner. Such research has identified four basic criteria of successful monitoring practices in human service agencies. The criteria include: 1) a focus on relevant agency operations, 2) objective and accurate implementation methods, 3) monitoring processes functioning as a means to an end and not an end in and of themselves, and 4) acceptance of the monitoring procedures among consumers, staff and management.

Relevant Monitoring Practices

Within an outcome management approach for operating human service agencies in a person-centered manner, monitoring practices should focus on two aspects of agency operations. First, monitoring procedures should address the attainment of consumer outcomes that

have been determined through a person-centered planning process to be desired by agency consumers and their families. Second, monitoring procedures should focus on how well agency staff and other support team members are performing activities that have been determined to be necessary for supporting consumers in experiencing the chosen outcomes. If agency monitoring practices do not address one of these two indices of agency supports and services, then the practices are not *relevant* from an outcome management perspective for operating a person-centered agency.

By now the recommendation that monitoring practices should focus on chosen outcomes among consumers and staff work activities necessary for achieving those outcomes should come as no surprise. Nevertheless, the point is repeated here because it is common to find considerable time and energy in human service agencies consumed with monitoring various aspects of agency operations that have no direct bearing on consumer outcomes derived from a person-centered plan. Many monitoring practices are established, for example, in response to perceived agency "crises" that are transient in nature or that really have no relation to consumer outcomes in the first place. Readers experienced with the Title XIX Medicaid ICF-MR review process in residential settings have undoubtedly observed agency monitoring procedures implemented following a Medicaid evaluative review that denoted concerns with certain agency operations. Often, the concerns expressed during the review reflect the values of the reviewers and not necessarily desired consumer outcomes derived through a person-centered process. Regardless, agencies implement monitoring procedures to help guard against concerns on the same issue arising during subsequent reviews, only to find that the concerns raised during the latter reviews change as the Medicaid reviewers change. The end result of this process is that agency staff spend considerable amounts of time monitoring something that has no impact on agency consumers attaining their desired outcomes — time that is taken away from relevant work activities.

In order to ensure that agency monitoring practices focus on relevant variables in human service agencies, monitoring procedures should not be implemented until the previously described processes for specifying person-centered consumer outcomes and related staff work activities have been completed. When desired outcomes have been specified through a person-centered process, along with the staff

work activities necessary to support consumers in attaining the outcomes, then monitoring procedures can be established to observe those two indices of agency effectiveness.

Unless monitoring practices focus on consumer outcomes derived through a person-centered process and on actions of support team members necessary to achieve those outcomes, then the practices are at best superfluous, and at worst, detrimental to operating an agency in a person-centered manner

Objective and *Accurate* Monitoring Practices

Objectivity and accuracy are the cornerstones of effective monitoring procedures. Objectivity refers to monitors making decisions during the monitoring process about the existence of a respective consumer outcome or staff work duty based on well-established criteria. Objectivity that stems from clearly articulated criteria ensures that information resulting from monitoring practices truly reflects what is occurring with agency practices. In contrast, if explicit criteria do not exist, monitors must make decisions about consumer outcomes and staff work performances based on the monitors' own criteria, current mood, or personal value set. Although the individual criteria, moods, and value sets of different monitors are important phenomena in the work place, they typically change from monitor to monitor and even within the same monitor across successive monitoring sessions. Information resulting from monitoring practices based on the latter decision-making processes is not likely to provide a true picture of agency effectiveness because the processes have more to do with the monitors than with the ongoing agency activities.

Problems with monitoring practices that are not conducted in an objective manner are well illustrated in meetings conducted around traditional individual program plans (e.g., Individual Family Service Plan, Individual Education Plan, Individual Habilitation Plan). It is common in such meetings to observe extended discussion over the relative worth of a certain agency practice or program activity for a given consumer. Essentially every person participating in the meeting has a different view of the practice of concern because each person has monitored the practice — albeit often on an informal basis — using his/her own criteria or value set. Making an informed decision about whether to continue or alter the practice is essentially impossi-

ble because there is no objective means of knowing if the practice has fulfilled its intended purpose for the consumer.

To ensure monitoring procedures are conducted objectively, clear-cut criteria must be established with which to judge the occurrence of the consumer outcome or staff work performance of concern. If a person-centered process has been followed in determining desired outcomes for consumers, and the necessary team member activities to assist consumers in achieving those outcomes have been specified, it is usually a straightforward task to subsequently establish objective criteria for monitoring the occurrence of those outcomes and work performances. For example, if respective agency consumers desire competitive employment with support, then the monitoring of employment placements obtained and maintained during a given time period would be a logical place to begin the monitoring process.

Accuracy of monitoring practices is closely related to objectivity of monitoring. Accurate monitoring involves different monitors using the monitoring procedures in the same manner such that they observe and record the same information about consumer outcomes and staff work performances. Having an objective monitoring system, with well-established criteria for the outcomes and performances to be observed, is a pre-requisite for an accurate monitoring system. However, a monitoring system's objectivity does not guarantee its accuracy. Different monitors may implement the (objectively based) monitoring system differently because some monitors are better trained than others, some monitors attend more to detail than others, etc.

The negative impact of an inaccurately conducted monitoring system is essentially the same as with a monitoring system that does not have an objective basis: the resulting information from various monitors does not present a true picture of the degree to which consumers are attaining chosen outcomes or to which team members are fulfilling designated responsibilities. A common illustration exists with monitoring systems in group homes for people with severe disabilities that focus on how effectively staffs' provision of leisure activities results in active consumer participation in the activities. Various group homes have monitoring systems that periodically measure the degree to which consumers participate in leisure activities. A review of the results of the monitoring conducted by the on-site supervisor of the group home for a given month may indicate that

the community leisure activities desired by consumers successfully supported consumer participation during 80% of the monitoring checks (i.e., on the average, during leisure times 80% of the individuals living in the group home were actively participating in the leisure activities). However, a monitor who is external to the home, such as a regional supervisor who oversees several group homes, may conduct several monitoring checks and find that the activities result in consumer participation on less than 50% of the checks. Often the reason for the discrepancy in such cases is that the on-site supervisor is implementing the monitoring system in a different manner than the external monitor.

To avoid inaccurate monitoring, it is necessary to conduct periodic *accuracy* checks (also commonly referred to as reliability checks). Accuracy checks involve two monitors simultaneously yet independently monitoring the same outcomes or work performances. Accuracy checks typically should be conducted in this manner on approximately 20% of all monitoring sessions. A general rule of thumb is that if the two monitors agree on at least 80% of their recordings, then the monitors are sufficiently accurate. If the monitors agree on less than 80% of their recordings, then the reasons for the disagreements must be determined. Determining the reasons for monitoring discrepancies usually entails a re-study of how consumer outcomes and related staff performances have been specified, or re-training of monitors.

Monitoring As A Means To An End

The third characteristic of successful monitoring does not pertain to monitoring procedures per se but rather, how the results of monitoring practices are used within an agency. As indicated earlier, numerous human service agencies monitor different agency activities. Such monitoring can result in accumulation of a considerable amount of information about agency operations. In many agencies though, the information is never put to any relevant use from a person-centered perspective. The data resulting from monitoring essentially is organized and then filed without impacting any important agency function.

From an outcome management perspective in a person-centered agency, information resulting from monitoring should be used either to implement changes in agency operations related to consumers

attaining person-centered outcomes, or to actively support existing operations. Hence, monitoring data must be used to determine the extent to which agency operations and staff work performance support or hinder attainment of desired consumer outcomes. Unless the information resulting from monitoring is used in this manner to improve or maintain agency operations, then there is no reason to monitor consumer outcomes or staff work performance. In short, monitoring must be viewed as a means to an end and not as an end in and of itself.

Examples of failure to use information stemming from monitoring practices are readily apparent on an individual consumer basis in many human service agencies. A frequent practice in many agencies is to monitor a consumer's progress in various programs, and especially in programs designed to teach an adaptive skill. To illustrate, a consumer's program may involve teaching the individual to exit a residence safely during an emergency because the skill was identified as significant during the planning process for supporting the consumer in moving into a desired apartment and living more independently. The purpose of monitoring consumer progress in such cases is generally considered a means of determining the extent to which the program is effective in assisting the consumer in acquiring the target skill. However, in a number of cases a consumer will go for weeks, months, and even years with the monitoring data indicating no significant progress in the teaching program. In such situations, information from the monitoring has not resulted in changes being made in the teaching program to bring about more significant progress. Perhaps even more importantly, collected monitoring data have not been carefully reviewed to assess their impact on the consumer's ability and time lines for reaching the desired outcomes. When information obtained from monitoring is not used to alter ineffective agency practices, such as ineffective teaching programs, then the monitoring is essentially a waste of everyone's time.

Wasteful monitoring practices also can exist on an agency-wide basis, in which data are collected throughout an agency on a specific aspect of consumer outcomes or staff work performance. For example, the frequency with which staff provide consumers with choices of recreational activities may be monitored in an adult retirement center. The data obtained from the monitoring on number of choices provided to consumers is often sent to a central office for summari-

zation and analysis. The resulting information is then distributed to various supervisory personnel for review. What subsequently happens with the information though is not attended to by agency management. What often happens is the various supervisors receive the information and simply file it. The information is not used by any agency personnel to alter their recreational policies and procedures or staff work duties in order to provide increased consumer choices.

In the two illustrations just provided, monitoring practices are not fulfilling the intended role within an outcome management process for operating a human service agency in a person-centered manner. The monitoring does not result in periodic changes in management practices, or decisions to continue certain practices with active and apparent support. To avoid such a situation, and the corresponding waste of agency time and resources, responsible agency personnel should routinely ask the question *"What does the monitoring information tell me and what should I do about it"*. Upon answering this question, if managers and related personnel find that they are not putting information resulting from the monitoring to use, then the monitoring process should be changed or abandoned.

Acceptable Monitoring Practices

The importance of conducting monitoring procedures in a manner that is acceptable to consumers and families, as well as staff and managers was noted in **Chapter 3**. In brief, it was stressed that individuals often dislike having their activities and performance monitored. Agency personnel who conduct monitoring checks also frequently dislike having to monitor the activities of others.

If the negative aspects of monitoring are not eliminated, then monitoring practices inevitably fail to fulfill their intended role in outcome management of leading agencies to a person-centered way of doing business. Consequently, special procedures must be conducted to ensure that monitoring practices are conducted in a manner that is acceptable to everyone involved. From the perspective of consumers and their families, it is crucial that respective individuals understand the purpose of the monitoring as discussed throughout this chapter. It is also critical that monitoring be conducted in consideration of the privacy of consumers and their family members. Generally though, when it is clear that the monitoring is an important management activity for ensuring high quality supports and services

within a given agency, consumers and family members are quite accepting of monitoring activities. In many respects, family members sincerely appreciate the concern of agency leaders for wanting to remain well informed and aware of agency activities — concern that is reflected in the implementation of well designed monitoring systems.

Concern for the impact of management's monitoring procedures is especially important in regard to staffs' acceptance of the monitoring. Even when monitoring procedures focus on attainment of consumer outcomes identified in person-centered plans, the procedures involve to at least some degree how staff are performing their duties in the work place. **Chapter 9** concludes with a summary of strategies designed specifically for enhancing staffs' acceptance of agency monitoring practices. Suffice it to say at this point that acceptability is a critical component of successful monitoring systems and should be considered prior to implementing any type of monitoring procedure in a human service agency.

Successful outcome management in person-centered agencies involves routine monitoring of agency operations in a manner that:

(1) **is relevant to consumer outcomes and related staff work performances**

(2) **is objective and accurate**

(3) **leads to improving and maintaining respective agency activities**

(4) **is acceptable to consumers, staff and management**

Case Study #1: Bloomfield

(Continued from Chapter 6)

Over the next few weeks, the teams finalized IRPs for the 25 pilot individuals, each with a unique dream statement about leisure, vocational and other daily or routine preferences. In addition, they presented a table to the Steering Committee summarizing the outcomes desired by the 25 consumers along with identified needs in staff training, staff job descriptions, transportation and access to petty cash. In addition, several changes in the IHP development process and on the IHP form itself were recommended.

Procedures for Monitoring Attainment of Consumer Outcomes

Monitoring consumer outcomes as part of an outcome management approach to operating human service agencies in a person-centered manner involves a combined process of monitoring outcomes for individual consumers and for groups of consumers. Most human service agencies have some means of monitoring individual consumer outcomes of one format or another. Probably the most common example is with performance goals that constitute various types of individual program plans. Program plans typically require some measure of progress toward attainment of the goals that comprise the plans. Usually an agency staff person such as a teacher, QMRP or case manager has the responsibility of monitoring a respective consumer's progress on each goal at designated time intervals.

The process just noted for monitoring individual consumer outcomes works to varying degrees of success in terms of the purpose of monitoring as discussed earlier in this chapter. Often, the success of the process varies based on the particular staff person responsible for monitoring a consumer's progress on goal attainment. Due to a variety of reasons including, for example, the skill, commitment and available time of the responsible monitor, some monitors perform their duties proficiently and some do not. The cases exemplified earlier in which consumers receive teaching services on skill acquisition programs for months or years without making significant progress represent some of the worst-case scenarios regarding unsuccessful monitoring practices.

Because of the varying degree of proficiency with which designated staff monitor individual consumer progress, an outcome management approach does not rely solely on such monitoring for assisting consumers in attaining desired goals and outcomes. Rather, outcome management includes an agency oversight process. Oversight systems generally involve monitoring outcomes of individual consumers in conjunction with outcomes for groups of consumers and ultimately, for the entire population of consumers served by an agency. This chapter section describes means through which outcomes of individual consumers and groups of consumers can be monitored in ways that meet the previously described characteristics of successful monitoring.

Within an outcome management approach to operating human service agencies in a person-centered manner, successful monitoring requires monitoring outcomes for individual consumers *and* for the entire consumer population served by the agency

Monitoring consumer outcomes always entails several essential steps. However, monitoring systems also vary in their component procedures depending on the types of outcomes to be monitored. To illustrate both the similarities and differences of various monitoring procedures, monitoring systems for three common types of consumer outcomes will be summarized. These outcomes include consumer skill development, indicators of ongoing life quality and major lifestyle changes.

Monitoring Outcomes Associated with Adaptive Skill Development

Monitoring outcomes associated with adaptive skill development of consumers represents one of the most common types of monitoring systems in traditional human service agencies. In agencies that adopt a person-centered way of doing business, monitoring outcomes related to consumer skill development is likewise important. Although desired outcomes identified in person-centered plans are many and varied, consumer skill development in a designated area represents a frequently desired outcome in many person-centered plans.

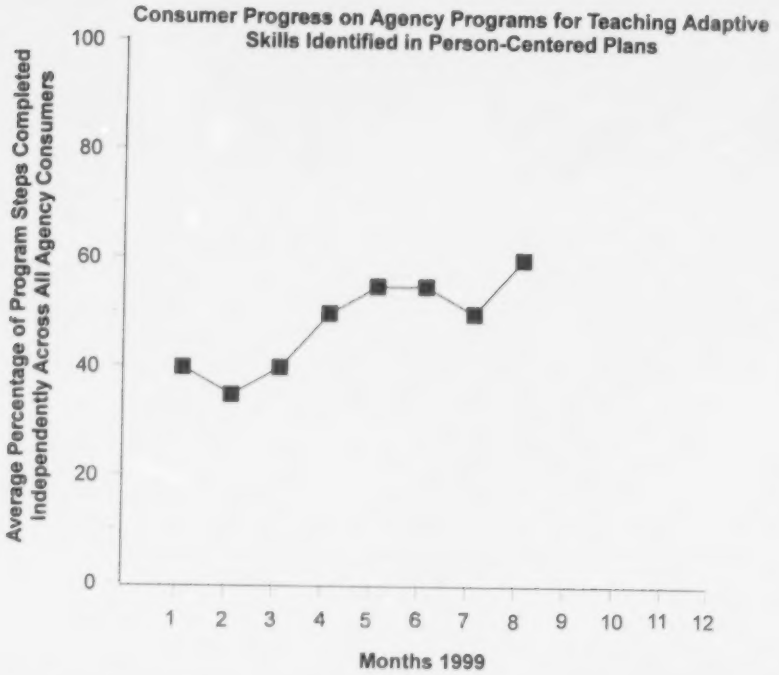
As illustrated earlier, most human service agencies have some type of individual goals for consumers based on various program plans. Many of those goals relate to acquisition of adaptive skills, ranging anywhere from sitting upright in a chair without physical support to passing the examination for obtaining a driver's license. As also noted earlier though, the usual review process for consumer program plans does not always facilitate progress by individual consumers toward achieving their skill-acquisition goals. This section describes an oversight monitoring approach that assists agency management in assuring that progress does occur for its consumer population in acquiring desired skills identified in person-centered plans.

In order to allow management personnel to effectively monitor the progress of all of its consumers in attaining skill-acquisition outcomes, the performance of all consumers on all respective teaching programs must be expressed in a comparable fashion. One convenient means of summarizing such performance involves determining

the percentage of program steps a consumer has mastered on each program for a given time period. Most skill acquisition programs for individuals with developmental and related disabilities consist of a series of program steps (e.g., as in a task-analyzed teaching program). By focusing on the percentage of program steps mastered by each consumer for each program, a common basis exists for monitoring skill-acquisition progress across all consumers.

To apply the progress-review monitoring process across an agency's consumer population for those person-centered outcomes related to adaptive skill acquisition, an average percentage of program steps completed by all consumers must be obtained on a regular time frame. Many human service agencies already have various review processes in place for individual consumers on a monthly basis, which is typically a sufficient time frame for regularly monitoring overall consumer progress. In this manner, the average percentage of program steps completed across all consumers and all programs each month provides a single outcome indicator of an agency's success in assisting its consumers in acquiring adaptive skills as identified in respective person-centered plans.

The following figure provides an illustration of how progress of consumers in acquiring adaptive skills identified in person-centered plans can be graphically summarized for a respective group of an agency's consumers. The figure provides a quick means of monitoring and evaluating the agency's overall success in teaching desired skills to consumers. Data represented in the figure indicate that for this particular agency, on average consumers are successfully completing more program steps independently across months. The increased independence demonstrated by consumers generally indicates agency staff are successfully implementing teaching programs to support consumers in progressing toward skill-acquisition outcome goals.



Sample graph showing progress of consumers in acquiring adaptive skills identified in person-centered plans. The graph shows the percentage of program steps completed independently averaged across all agency consumers for each of eight months.

Because the indicator involving percentage of programs steps mastered by an agency's consumer population each month is an average, the indicator represents a rather global measure of the success of agency teaching endeavors. In this regard, a variety of variables can affect the average percentage of program steps completed by a group of consumers besides the effectiveness of an agency's teaching programs. Discontinuation of certain programs, admission or release of individual consumers from an agency's caseload, consumer absences due to extended illness, etc., can all affect the percentage figure from month to month. However, experience indicates that with one major exception, over time such variables tend to balance each other out such that the average percentage still represents a useful program indicator for overall agency management. The exception is when individual consumers complete an entire teaching program and then begin a new program. When new programs are initiated, consumers often are able to complete only a few steps of the programs relative to programs that have been in place for some time. Hence, if a large number of consumers master a program

in a given month, the percentage of program steps completed for the following month with new programs may be spuriously low.

To account for the effects of consumers completing various teaching programs and beginning new programs identified in their person-centered plans, it is helpful if monitoring systems for consumer progress include the number of teaching programs mastered by consumers on a monthly basis. The latter figure should be reviewed in conjunction with the average percentage of program steps mastered each month. By monitoring both the average percentage of program steps mastered across all consumers in conjunction with the total number of programs completed, a rather accurate picture can be obtained of the overall success of an agency in assisting its consumers in acquiring adaptive skills identified in person-centered plans.

Monitoring Ongoing Indicators of Quality Outcomes

Monitoring procedures associated with adaptive skill development as just described address outcomes that by their nature, take a period of time to attain. There are other important outcomes frequently identified in person-centered plans that are desired to occur essentially continuously, or at least on a daily basis. Many of the latter outcomes are taken for granted among the general populace and include such routine occurrences as eating desired foods, being happy, and spending time with friends or loved ones. For people with disabilities, and particularly for individuals who have more severe disabilities, such occurrences cannot be taken for granted. Significant effort is often required of support personnel to help ensure consumers experience these types of outcomes on a frequent or routine basis.

Because many important outcomes desired on a routine basis cannot be taken for granted, and effort is required among support personnel to help consumers attain these outcomes, it is important that agencies regularly monitor how consumers are experiencing routinely expected outcomes. There are several basic means of monitoring these types of occurrences, each of which varies somewhat based on the specific type of outcomes to be monitored and the severity of consumer disabilities. The most common of these monitoring procedures are described in subsequent sections. Elaboration and illustrations of other applications of the monitoring systems to be described can be obtained by referring to the **Outcome Monitoring** section of the **Selected Readings**.

Self-Report Monitoring Systems. The most obvious and direct way to determine if a consumer is obtaining something the consumer desires on a routine basis is to simply ask the individual. To facilitate this type of self-report monitoring of consumer fulfillment of daily desires, a number of self-report and interview tools have been developed. These instruments systematically assess the views of individuals with disabilities on various experiences that are identified as being important to the individuals. Examples of instruments that address a variety of outcomes associated with quality of life include the *Quality of Life Questionnaire,* the *Multifaceted Lifestyle Satisfaction Scale,* and the *Satisfaction Interview Scale* (again, see **Outcome Monitoring** section of the **Selected Readings**).

Before describing how self-report measures such as checklists and interview instruments can be used to monitor person-centered outcomes that are desired to occur on a routine or daily basis, a primary qualification warrants mention. Self-report measures are only useful for assessing consumer opinions among individuals who have the expressive and receptive communication skills to validly respond to the questions that comprise these measures. Individuals must be able to understand the questions and have a means of responding to each question in a manner that is understood by the support person who is using the self-report format for monitoring purposes. The means of responding may involve idiosyncratic gestures, simple vocalizations, written responses or any number of alternative or augmented communication strategies such as manual signing, voice output communication aids (VOCAs), word/picture communication wallets, etc.

Once a determination is made that various consumers reliably demonstrate the skills to respond to a self-report monitoring system, then monitoring of the individuals' experiences with day-to-day outcomes can proceed using the following steps. First, the outcomes of concern must be specified such that the occurrence and nonoccurrence of the outcomes can be clearly asked by monitors and answered by consumers. On the most basic level, such specification means that a consumer can clearly determine and express if the outcome occurred or not during a given period of time. The outcomes to be specified should of course be initially determined using person-centered planning processes.

The second step in the self-report monitoring process involves development of an instrument with which to ask each consumer

whether or not the consumer experienced the targeted outcomes during the designated time period. The instrument should have identified spaces to record consumer names, the name of the monitor who is administering the instrument, the date and each consumer response to each question. As indicated earlier, there are a variety of instruments available for such purposes. Frequently, these instruments consist of a standard set of questions about quality of life issues. The standard questions, although useful in their own right, often do not include questions about specific outcomes that have been identified in the person-centered plans of respective individuals. Usually agency personnel must prepare questions that specifically target the outcomes of concern for each individual.

Generally, the most useful types of self-report instruments involve questions that can be responded to with discrete "yes" or "no" answers or that can be answered on a Likert-type rating scale. The former questions are most appropriate for monitoring outcomes for which the primary concern is whether the outcomes simply did or did not occur during a given time period. Examples of these types of outcomes are reflected in questions such as "Did you see your friend today?", "Did you see the movie you wanted to see last week?", or "Did you go to town this weekend?". Assuming each of these experiences relates to something identified in the person-centered plan of an individual consumer, answers to the questions can provide agency representatives with a good indication of whether the agency is successful in helping the individual to routinely experience outcomes desired on a frequent basis.

In contrast to self-report instruments assessing whether a consumer experienced a desired outcome or not, Likert-type rating scales involve asking consumers to rate certain experiences. Rating scales are useful for those outcomes that cannot be answered on a straightforward yes or no basis, or for which more detailed information is desired. The most useful rating scales consist of a neutral point between the negative end of the scale and the positive end. The following illustration is an example of a typical scale for rating a consumer's satisfaction with various agency operations or daily experiences. The illustrated scale can be used to assess an individual's satisfaction with such things as the evening meal, specific recreational events, a job or one's general social life.

SAMPLE RATING SCALE FOR ASSESSING CONSUMER SATISFACTION WITH ROUTINE AGENCY SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
extremely bad	very bad	somewhat bad	neither bad nor good	somewhat good	very good	extremely good

The rating scale just illustrated has several noteworthy characteristics. First, there are 7 points on the scale. Research has indicated that although 7-point scales may be somewhat more difficult for some consumers to respond to, these types of scales tend to provide more valid information than scales with fewer response options such as commonly used 3-point scales. Second, because a consumer response is recorded on a numerical point (i.e., from 1 to 7) corresponding to the descriptor that describes the consumer's views, results of monitoring episodes with the rating scales are readily quantified. Such quantification facilitates evaluation of outcome monitoring over time.

The third step in the monitoring process with self-report measures is to develop a schedule regarding how frequently the measures should be obtained. The recommended frequency for monitoring various consumer outcomes differs based on a number of considerations. Specific guidelines regarding how frequently monitoring checks should be conducted are discussed in **Chapter 9**. On a general level however, monitoring checks should be conducted at a frequency that allows agency executives to feel comfortable that they have accurate knowledge regarding how often consumers are experiencing identified person-centered outcomes during routine conditions in the agency.

Using self-report means to successfully monitor consumer outcomes involves:

1) **specifying outcomes such that their occurrence and nonoccurrence during a designated time interval can be clearly asked of, and answered by, the consumer (or responsible advocate)**
2) **developing an instrument that contains the questions to ask of the consumer**
3) **implementing a schedule regarding how often to ask the selected questions of the consumer**

Direct Observation Monitoring Systems. In an outcome management approach, the most common means of monitoring consumer outcomes expected to occur on a routine basis is direct observation. Direct observation involves actually seeing the degree to which outcomes are being achieved or experienced. Direct observation procedures are heavily relied on in outcome management because there is no better way to determine if an agency is successful in assisting its consumers in attaining person-centered outcomes than to see proof of the outcomes being achieved.

Another reason direct observation is the primary monitoring approach used in outcome management is that self-report measures as described in the preceding section cannot always be relied on to provide valid information. Problems with the validity of self-report measures occur for a variety of reasons including, for example, insufficient skills among some persons with disabilities to respond in an informed manner to self-report questions, and hidden or subtle pressure for consumers to respond to self-report questions in a certain way. For these reasons, it is usually recommended that even when self-report monitoring systems are used, the systems be supplemented with direct observation monitoring.

There are a variety of types of direct observation procedures for monitoring consumer outcomes. Each type varies in large part based on the type of consumer outcome to be monitored. Specific monitoring systems most appropriate for a given situation also depend on which particular type of system is most easily used by the staff who conduct the monitoring. However, essentially all direct observation monitoring systems involve a sampling of consumer activity during a given time period. The primary types of direct observation systems are described in the following paragraphs.

One of the most practical types of direct observation monitoring systems for consumer outcomes is *momentary time sampling*. Momentary time sampling involves making a quick observation of what consumers are doing at a specific point or moment in time. The intent of such a process is to provide a "snapshot" recording of what is occurring with a designated outcome at that specific moment. By making repeated momentary observations, or snapshots, an accurate indication can usually be obtained as to the degree to which certain outcomes are being realized.

Momentary time sample systems are most useful for monitoring

outcomes that are specifically expected to occur during certain time periods. For example, a desired outcome stemming from a person-centered process for a young adult with mild mental retardation might be to work in a supported job that involves working with workers who do not have disabilities. The intent of the monitoring may be to determine if indeed the individual is working *with* the nondisabled workers, in contrast to working on the job in an isolated fashion. To monitor the occurrence of such an outcome, quick observations may be conducted at different times during the work week by a monitor looking into the work area of the job and unobtrusively observing whether the individual is actually with the other workers at that moment in time. Of course what constitutes working "with" other workers would have to be defined, which should occur during the specification part of person-centered planning and outcome management (see **Chapters 5** and **6**).

Momentary time sampling systems are also advantageous for monitoring outcomes among groups of consumers. To illustrate, an agency may provide adult education services in settings for individuals with severe multiple disabilities. A desired outcome for individuals in the settings may be to actively participate in activities that enhance utilization of adaptive equipment, such as using switch mechanisms to activate compact disk players. To determine how effective the services are in achieving such an outcome on a routine basis, momentary time sample observations could be conducted periodically during the week. The observations would entail a monitor entering the specific education setting and immediately looking at each individual and recording which individuals are using, or being supported in using, an adaptive device at the specific moment each individual is briefly observed. If the services were having the desired impact, an analysis of repeated time samples would indicate that the vast majority of individuals were using the adaptive equipment across monitoring sessions.

A second type of direct observation system for monitoring consumer outcomes is *interval recording*. Interval monitoring systems involve observing an individual's actions for a specified interval of time and recording whether or not a desired outcome occurred during any part of the designated interval. For example, a desired outcome for a teenager with moderate mental disabilities may be for the individual to interact socially with other teenagers in typical social

situations such as a high school club. Unobtrusive observations may be conducted periodically during club activities by a teacher who observes the individual's activities for a series of consecutive one-minute intervals. For each interval, the teacher would record whether or not an interaction occurred during the respective interval.

Using an interval monitoring system, records can be maintained of the percentage of observation intervals for each separate monitoring session in which the outcome of concern occurred. Evaluations can then be made over time regarding the degree to which an agency is successful in assisting consumers in experiencing the outcome by comparing the average percentage of monitoring intervals during which the outcome was in existence.

Interval monitoring systems are especially useful for outcomes that are difficult to determine precisely when the outcomes begin and end. In the illustration just provided, it can be difficult to determine when a new interaction occurs versus the continuation of an ongoing interaction. With the interval system, it does not matter if an interaction is new or not, only if any interaction occurred during each respective interval.

A third major type of direct observation system for use with consumer outcomes involves *continuous monitoring*. In a continuous monitoring system, an individual's activity is observed continuously for a given period of time and each occurrence of an outcome of concern is immediately recorded. Continuous monitoring systems are well suited for outcomes for which the beginning and end of the occurrence of the outcomes are easily discernable. Continuous monitoring systems are also best used with outcomes that are expected to occur at a relatively low but predictable frequency.

One of the most common applications of continuous monitoring systems is with certain types of problem behavior that occurs among some consumers with developmental disabilities. Problem behavior such as aggression toward others, temper tantrums, and property destruction is often monitored continuously in that whenever a respective consumer engages in the problem behavior, a recording is made by a staff person who observes the behavior. The outcomes of concern in these cases generally relate to participation in meaningful activities *without* the occurrence of the identified problem behavior. In order to determine if such an outcome is achieved (i.e., the problem behavior does not occur), continuous monitoring is usually necessary.

Direct observation systems for monitoring consumer outcomes desired to occur on an ongoing basis include:

1) momentary time sampling

2) interval systems

3) continuous monitoring

Monitoring Indicators Of Major Lifestyle Changes

The monitoring systems just described pertain primarily to outcomes that are desired to occur routinely in the lives of consumers. There are other types of outcomes identified in person-centered plans that affect the quality of life of individuals with disabilities that by their nature, are not expected to occur on a routine or daily basis. The most important of the latter outcomes relate to major lifestyle changes.

One of the most important effects of a person-centered process is assisting consumers in making major changes in their lives that significantly enhance their life quality. Major lifestyle changes that may result from a person-centered plan include obtaining a highly preferred job, developing a network of new friends, purchasing a house, and choosing a compatible roommate. An outcome management approach can greatly facilitate an agency's effectiveness in successfully supporting major lifestyle changes that are identified through a person-centered process. As repeatedly stressed already in this chapter, if outcome management is going to be used successfully within a human service agency to help consumers achieve respective outcomes — including major lifestyle changes — then monitoring of those outcomes is necessary.

Monitoring the occurrence of many lifestyle changes such as acquiring a preferred job or moving into a chosen apartment usually is rather straightforward. These types of events are readily apparent when they occur. Other lifestyle changes identified in person-centered plans are not as straightforward or easy to monitor such as realizing a dream of expanding one's network of friends or becoming a more active member of one's community. In these instances monitoring may be accomplished by quantifying the desired outcomes. In the first example, a relationships map developed during the initial person-centered planning activities might be compared with a relationships map developed one year after the initiation of person-cen-

tered activities, in which the number of new friends is counted. In the second example, places and day-in-the-life maps developed before and periodically throughout the implementation of person-centered planning might be compared to count number of community sites visited, percentage of time spent in the community or number of valued social roles (e.g., employee, homeowner, volunteer) assumed by a consumer according to a quality-of-life checklist.

Despite the ease of monitoring many types of major lifestyle changes, this aspect of agency management is frequently overlooked or only partially completed. Few agencies regularly monitor and maintain usable records regarding the degree to which their consumers experience desired lifestyle changes identified in person-centered plans.

Monitoring lifestyle changes among consumers in a manner that enhances an agency's success in supporting the occurrence of such changes involves three basic steps. First, time lines must be established as part of the person-centered planning process in terms of when agreed upon lifestyle changes should take place. Second, records must be maintained as to when the changes actually occur. Third, responsible agency personnel must review the records to maintain an awareness of the degree to which the designated changes occurred as planned.

One practical means of performing the monitoring processes just summarized involves establishing monthly summaries of the success of the agency in supporting consumers in making desired changes. In brief, monthly records are maintained regarding the percentage of lifestyle changes across all of an agency's consumers scheduled to occur during a given month that indeed did occur during the month. This process provides a running account of the agency's effectiveness in achieving very important outcomes in the lives of its consumers (i.e., percentage of scheduled lifestyle changes that were actually achieved). Because the types of changes being addressed are rather extensive as exemplified earlier, a monthly basis for reviewing the occurrence of the changes usually is sufficiently timely. A daily or weekly monitoring process as described previously with the monitoring of outcomes desired to occur on a more routine basis typically is not necessary because major lifestyle changes usually do not occur on a daily or weekly basis.

CHAPTER 9

Monitoring Staff Work Performance Related to Attainment of Consumer Outcomes

Monitoring work activities of staff that are identified as necessary for assisting agency consumers in achieving person-centered outcomes is as important as monitoring consumer outcomes themselves. For many consumer outcomes to be achieved, human service staff must fulfill a variety of job duties in a consistent and competent manner. As discussed in this and preceding chapters, it should not be assumed that staff work performance will automatically occur as desired. Rather, successfully managing human service agencies in a person-centered manner involves taking active steps to ensure that staff perform work duties proficiently. One of those management steps is systematic monitoring of staff work performance on a regular basis.

The characteristics of successful practices used to monitor staff work performance as part of an outcome management approach to operating person-centered agencies are the same characteristics as described previously for monitoring consumer outcomes. Specifically, the practices need to be *relevant, objective and accurate, a means to an end,* and *acceptable.* Of particular concern in this chapter is the acceptability of agency practices used to monitor staff work activities. Without special attention and care by management, staff monitoring systems often lead to staff disgruntlement and related morale problems. This chapter includes a discussion of strategies specifically designed to ensure that procedures used to monitor the work performance of human service staff are well received.

Outcome.management procedures for monitoring staff work performance involve the same basic processes described earlier for monitoring attainment of consumer outcomes in person-centered agencies. These monitoring procedures include self-report, time sampling, interval monitoring and continuous observation strategies. Descriptions of the component procedures of each of these types of monitoring systems were provided in **Chapter 8** and hence, will not be repeated here. However, how each type of monitoring system can be applied specifically to staff work performance that relates to supporting consumers in attaining outcomes identified in person-

centered plans will be presented.

Self-Report Monitoring Systems

The most frequently used monitoring systems with staff work performance in traditional human service settings typically involve self-report monitoring. Self-report monitoring, or *self-recording* as it is usually referred to when pertaining to staff work performance, involves staff making written records concerning aspects of their work activities. Common self-recording procedures in human service settings include sign-in and sign-out systems for monitoring staff attendance at work, signature forms to indicate attendance at meetings, and telephone logs through which staff record their long distance phone use.

When outcome management is applied within human service agencies attempting to function in a person-centered manner, several issues must be addressed if staff self-recording is to be a useful means of monitoring staff work performance. In particular, the work activities to be self-recorded should be among those duties specified as necessary for assisting consumers in achieving outcomes identified in the consumers' person-centered plans. This aspect of monitoring — that is, *relevance* of monitoring practices — of course pertains to any type of monitoring system used within an outcome management approach in person-centered agencies. However, this critical feature is mentioned specifically in regard to self-recording because many self-recording systems in human service agencies are implemented for reasons other than being necessary for assisting consumers in achieving desired outcomes. Although typical self-recording procedures may be useful for respective aspects of agency operations and most frequently, fulfilling an administrative record-keeping requirement, such procedures often have little if any bearing on consumer outcomes.

A second requirement for successful self-recording as a monitoring procedure within an outcome management approach is that periodic accuracy or reliability checks need to be conducted. Like any monitoring system, self-recording is subject to a number of influences that can affect the accuracy of what different staff persons record about their work activities. Consequently, steps need to be taken periodically to verify that information resulting from self-recording is indeed accurate.

A third factor related to the success of self-recording as a monitoring process pertains to the amount of effort required of staff to record information about their work performance. Self-recording generally requires more time and effort on the part of staff than other monitoring systems used with staff work performance. The increased time and effort is due simply to the fact that staff are doing the recording in contrast to other monitoring systems in which other agency designees monitor and record information about staffs' work performance. Because of the time and effort associated with self-recording, efforts are warranted by management personnel to minimize the work required of staff to self-record information about job performance.

The rationale for minimizing time and effort required of staff to complete self-recording assignments relates to a basic tenet of effective management: the more effort required of staff to complete a work task, the less likely it is that the task will be completed consistently and proficiently. Put another way, one means of increasing the likelihood that a given work task will be completed appropriately day in and day out is to minimize the amount of effort required to complete the task. Hence, finding ways to reduce the effort required of staff to fulfill self-recording duties as a means of monitoring their work performance increases the probability that the self-recording will occur as desired. Minimizing work effort associated with self-recording also can have the effect of enhancing staffs' general acceptance of the monitoring duties.

As the time and effort required to perform a given job task increases, the likelihood the task will be performed consistently and proficiently decreases

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There are three easy steps for reducing the time and effort required of staff to complete self-recording duties. First, self-recording forms should be developed such that the amount of writing required of staff is minimized. The forms should be designed such that as much as possible, staff are only required to mark through words or abbreviations that represent aspects of work performance in contrast to writing time-consuming narrative descriptions. Second, the self-recording forms should be readily accessible in the staffs' immediate work area where staff perform the work tasks for which they will be completing the self-recording forms. Making the forms immediately available (i.e., in contrast to staff having to go to an office to obtain

the forms) reduces staff time to secure the forms. Third, using the same rationale as with making the forms readily available, arrangements should be made for staff to deposit completed forms in the same accessible place in which they secured the forms, or in an equally accessible place.

Following the guidelines just noted, self-recording by staff can represent a means of monitoring staff work performance that is especially relevant for human service agencies adopting a person-centered way of doing business. Once consumer outcomes have been identified in person-centered plans along with delineation of staff activities necessary to support attainment of respective outcomes, staff can be requested to record when they have completed the specified activities. The recordings can then be reviewed by leaders or facilitators of person-centered support teams as a means of maintaining records and accountability regarding the fulfillment of assigned staff duties. In turn, the accountability related to staff fulfillment of support duties enhances accountability for ensuring that consumers attain their desired outcomes.

Time Sample Monitoring Systems

As described with monitoring systems for consumer outcomes, time sampling systems are best suited for monitoring staff work activities that are expected to occur almost continuously during a given time period. Time sampling systems are probably the most useful and applicable of all monitoring systems for observing the degree to which staff are performing duties that are scheduled to be performed during respective periods of the work day. As long as the monitor is aware of what is supposed to be occurring in the work place during a given period, time sample observations can be conducted to provide a useful indicator of the quality of staffs' day-to-day work. As described in **Chapter 8**, a time sample procedure entails a monitor making a series of brief "snapshot" observations of designated areas of staff work performance.

A prototypical use of time sampling systems relates to staff work duties in living units of residential centers for individuals with profound mental retardation. A common responsibility of residential staff during certain times in these settings is to encourage consumers to participate in leisure activities. Using a time sampling system, a monitor simply enters a living unit, immediately observes each staff

person's ongoing performance and records whether each person is interacting with consumers in a manner to encourage leisure activity participation (e.g., prompting or reinforcing consumer leisure involvement). By conducting repeated time sample observations over time, an evaluation of staffs' performance can then be made by reviewing the percentage of observations in which staff were actually encouraging consumer participation in leisure activities.

Interval Monitoring Systems

Interval systems for monitoring staff work activities involve observing staff work performance throughout a designated time interval and recording whether or not a desired job activity was observed to occur during the interval. Interval systems are best suited for those job responsibilities that occur frequently, but for relatively brief periods of time. The most common applications of interval monitoring systems with staff performance typically involve interactions staff have with consumers who have severe disabilities. A critical variable affecting the quality of life of people with severe disabilities such as severe or profound mental retardation is the frequency and type of interpersonal interactions in which the individuals engage on a day-to-day basis. Interactions with other persons, such as direct support personnel, affect the learning opportunities of consumers, set the occasion for providing necessary support in self-care and medically related areas, and increase opportunities to participate in enjoyable activities.

Despite the importance of interpersonal interactions on the quality of life among consumers with severe disabilities, such interactions do not necessarily occur on a frequent basis in congregate situations. Consequently, a significant concern in settings such as group homes, day care centers and residential living units is the degree to which direct support personnel provide consumers with opportunities for social interactions. Interval systems are well suited for application as part of an outcome management approach to help ensure that sufficient opportunities for interactions are indeed provided for agency consumers.

Typical interval monitoring systems for interaction opportunities involve observing the activities of a respective staff person for consecutive 30-second or 1-minute intervals. Within each interval, the occurrence or nonoccurrence of an interaction between the staff per-

son and a consumer is recorded. Interval systems are used in this manner because often the interactions are brief in nature, due in part to limited communication skills of certain consumers, yet expected to occur frequently as part of the staff person's routine job duties. Interval systems are more likely to result in observations of interactions that do occur relative to time sampling systems in which a momentary observation is not likely to coincide with the brief occurrence of a given interaction.

Continuous Monitoring Systems

Continuous monitoring systems generally are used with staff performance when a staff person is performing a rather complex job task and a supervisor or other monitor is interested in determining the proficiency with which the staff person completes the task. In order to evaluate the staff person's competence in completing the job duty, the monitor must observe the staff person perform all aspects of the task. Hence, the supervisor must continuously monitor the staff person's performance throughout the entire task.

A common example of the use of continuous monitoring pertains to settings in which staff are expected to provide teaching services for consumers with disabilities. With the exception of certified teachers, most staff in human service agencies do not receive training in methods of teaching individuals with disabilities prior to assuming human service jobs. Consequently, many agencies have to train new personnel in teaching methodologies.

As discussed in **Chapter 7**, staff training programs cannot be considered successful until the staff trainee is observed performing the designated skill competently in the actual job situation. In the example of concern here, a staff person would have to be observed conducting a teaching session with a consumer in a proficient manner. A continuous monitoring system would be most appropriate for monitoring the teaching performance of the staff person because the entire teaching session would have to be observed to adequately evaluate the staff person's teaching proficiency.

Determining the Frequency for Conducting Monitoring Checks

Periodically throughout this and the preceding chapter, reference has been made to the frequency with which certain monitoring procedures should be used within human service agencies. Determining how frequently to monitor various consumer outcomes and related

staff performances is a critical decision affecting the overall utility of monitoring within an outcome management approach to operating person-centered agencies. From a general perspective, the guideline offered in **Chapter 8** for frequency of monitoring attainment of consumer outcomes is also relevant for frequency of monitoring staff work performance related to those outcomes: the most important determinant regarding how often monitoring should occur is the confidence agency executives have that information stemming from the monitoring provides sufficient knowledge about agency operations.

The essence of the guideline just offered for determining how often monitoring of consumer outcomes and staff work performances should occur relates to the primary purpose of monitoring. As stressed earlier, in an outcome management approach monitoring is used to provide agency executives with information for determining whether to take action to change existing agency practices or to actively support ongoing practices. Executives and managers have to determine if the data resulting from monitoring provides sufficient information upon which to base decisions to change or maintain respective agency operations. When sufficient information does not seem available, monitoring of given agency activities usually needs to occur more frequently.

The most important determinant regarding the frequency of monitoring consumer outcomes and staff work activities is the confidence agency executives have concerning their knowledge about how well staff are performing work duties and consumers are achieving desired outcomes

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Additional Guidelines for Determining How Often to Monitor Consumer Outcomes and Related Staff Performances

In addition to managerial opinion regarding the sufficiency of the information obtained from existing monitoring practices, there are several other variables that can affect the frequency with which monitoring should occur. These variables are reflected in the guidelines presented in this section. The guidelines describe *interrelated* situations occurring in typical human service settings that affect how frequently monitoring is needed within an outcome managment approach. Each situation can impact every other situation. As such,

when making a decision about frequency of monitoring, all of the situations should be considered and not just one situation in isolation.

Basing Frequency of Monitoring on Expected Occurrence of Consumer Outcomes and Staff Performances. In order for monitoring to provide useful information about routine agency operations, monitoring must be conducted on a schedule that is less frequent than, but generally parallels, the frequency with which respective operations are expected to occur. The more frequently outcomes and specific work activities of staff are expected in an agency, the more frequently the respective outcomes and performances should be monitored. For example, for consumer outcomes and staff performances that should occur daily, the monitoring of those outcomes and performances generally should be conducted weekly whereas for outcomes and work performances expected weekly, monitoring usually can be conducted on a monthly basis.

Basing the frequency of monitoring on the expected frequency of consumer outcome attainment and staff work duties represents a guideline that is generally sufficient during routine agency operations. However, in any human service agency there are special events that disrupt routine operations. When disruptions in routine agency supports and services occur, then the frequency of monitoring usually needs to be increased.

Monitoring of consumer outcome attainment and staff work duties generally should occur at a schedule that is less frequent but parallel to the frequency with which those outcomes and work duties are routinely expected to occur

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Increasing Monitoring Frequency when Staff Turnover Increases. A common phenomenon in human service agencies is disruption in agency supports and services when the rate of staff turnover is higher than usual. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the various reasons why agency operations tend to suffer when the staff population of an agency undergoes significant changes. Suffice it to say that agency management typically needs to be more concerned than usual about the quality of agency supports and services when staff turnover is high and a large number of new staff are working in the agency. Consequently, more frequent monitoring of staff work performance and the effects on consumer out-

come attainment is usually warranted during these times to keep managment abreast of the effectiveness of agency operations.

Increasing Frequency of Monitoring Following Major Organizational Changes. Similar to the effects of increased staff turnover in an agency, major organizational changes can affect staff work performance and attainment of consumer outcomes. Such changes include, for example, restructuring of the agency's organizational chain of command, reassignment of supervisors to different agency work units, additions to an agency's consumer caseload, and agency cutbacks or staff downsizing. When these types of organizational changes occur, the quality of an agency's supports and services is often affected. Sometimes the changes are beneficial for consumers and sometimes the changes are detrimental. In order for management to accurately and quickly determine the effects of organizational changes on staff work activities and consumer outcomes, increased monitoring of day-to-day agency operations is usually warranted.

Basing Monitoring Frequency on the Results of Monitoring. The final guideline regarding the frequency of monitoring consumer outcomes and staff work activities pertains to what the information resulting from monitoring checks actually tells agency management. When monitoring checks indicate that consumer outcomes are being achieved on an acceptable level and that staff are performing work duties in a consistent and competent fashion, then there is less need for frequent monitoring. In contrast, when results of monitoring indicate that consumers are experiencing difficulties in achieving desired outcomes and/or that staff performance problems are apparent, then the frequency of monitoring should be increased.

Increasing the frequency of monitoring when results of monitoring checks indicate problems within an agency serves two useful functions. First, in accordance with the primary purpose of monitoring from an outcome management approach, more frequent monitoring provides an increased amount of information for management to determine the nature of the problems and how to improve the situation. Second, at times the increased monitoring itself can improve working operations. The latter effect of monitoring can occur for a variety of reasons. Some of the reasons will be discussed in subsequent chapters on changing and maintaining staff performance. Suffice it to say at this point that because of the increased monitoring, staff become aware that management is more concerned than usual

with certain work activities or consumer outcomes. Such awareness can serve to prompt staff to improve their work performance. It is also important though to note that this reactive effect of monitoring on staff performance is not a consistent occurrence and should not be relied on as a sole management approach for attempting to improve staff work activities.

The frequency of monitoring consumer outcomes and staff work activities should be more frequent than usual when:

1) **specified outcomes and work activities are expected to occur most frequently**

2) **a substantial increase in staff turnover occurs**

3) **an agency undergoes major organizational changes**

4) **results of ongoing monitoring checks indicate problems with attainment of consumer outcomes or staff work performance**

Making Monitoring Acceptable

If a management procedure is to have long-term viability, then the procedure must be acceptable to staff and management. When staff find management actions unacceptable, staff invariably find ways to counter the actions. Similarly, if managers and supervisors are expected to engage in practices they do not like — even if the practices are effective in terms of enhancing work place operations — the practices will eventually be avoided or seriously altered (see **Chapter 3** for previous discussion regarding the importance of acceptability of management practices).

Concern over the acceptability of management practices is especially relevant when considering monitoring procedures used with staff work performance. As indicated previously, most people do not like to have their work activities monitored on a regular basis. As also noted earlier though, such dislike is not due to monitoring per se, but *how* monitoring is usually conducted in human service settings. Formal monitoring of staff work activities typically occurs when management suspects something undesirable is occurring in the work place. The purpose of monitoring in these situations essentially is for

management to catch individual staff who are not performing as desired and then take some type of punitive or disciplinary action. As such, monitoring usually functions to signal staff that something undesirable is about to happen.

When applying outcome management to promote person-centeredness within the operations of a human service agency, special concern is directed to monitoring staff performance in a manner that staff find acceptable. Monitoring in a way that is positive for staff is an important component of effectively supporting staff in completing their job duties in a proficient and enjoyable manner. The following sections describe procedures for monitoring staff work activities in a way that is usually well received and appreciated by staff in human service agencies.

Ensure Staff Are Informed about the Rationale and Process Involved in Monitoring Their Work Performance

Applied research in human service agencies has indicated that acceptance of management's monitoring practices is enhanced if staff are well informed about why the monitoring is occurring and exactly how their performance is to be monitored. Consequently, before any formal monitoring of staff work activities is initiated, it is helpful if respective supervisors meet with staff and explain in an open and honest manner why the monitoring is to be conducted. The explanation should also specify how the performance area to be monitored is related to consumer attainment of goals derived from the consumers' person-centered plans. To ensure that staff are truly familiar with the monitoring process to be used to observe their work performance, it is likewise beneficial if staff are shown how to perform the monitoring themselves in either a role-play situation or on the actual job. When staff use the monitoring system themselves, any misconceptions staff might have about what a management representative is doing when the latter person monitors staff work performance can be avoided.

Provide Staff with Immediate Feedback after Each Monitoring Session

Applied research also has indicated that acceptance of monitoring is increased if staff know results of the monitoring of their performance as soon after a given monitoring session as possible. Providing feedback about observed staff performance immediately after the

observation can relieve anxiety among staff that monitoring often evokes. Similarly, providing feedback allows staff to ask questions of the monitor if the staff are not sure of the reason for the monitoring. The interactions with the monitor during the feedback session also can afford staff an opportunity to correct any misconceptions the monitor may have had about an observed staff activity. Because of the beneficial impact of immediate feedback on staffs' acceptance of having their performance monitored, it is recommended that monitors be instructed in means of giving feedback, and instructed to take the time to provide feedback as soon after each monitoring session as possible.

Although obtaining feedback immediately is usually the most preferred time frame for receiving feedback, acceptance of performance monitoring also can be enhanced by providing additional feedback on a delayed basis. The delayed feedback can be provided several days after the monitoring session and be used to supplement feedback that was provided immediately after the monitoring session. It can be helpful if the delayed feedback is presented in written format through a memo, e-mail, or short note. Research has demonstrated that staff often prefer to receive a written summary of the results of the observation of their performance in conjunction with spoken feedback (i.e., during presentation of spoken feedback immediately after a monitoring session) relative to receiving only the spoken feedback.

Use Common Courtesy during Monitoring

The last means to be discussed for enhancing staffs' acceptance of performance monitoring is the most apparent but also the most frequently overlooked. Specifically, monitoring practices should be conducted with common courtesy. Common courtesy essentially means whoever monitors staff performance treats staff in accordance with general principles of social politeness. Monitors should socially greet staff when entering staffs' work place for monitoring purposes and end the monitoring session with a pleasant, albeit brief, interaction with staff.

In one sense, recommending that monitoring procedures be conducted with common courtesy seems to be stating the obvious. The recommendation is provided here though because in many agencies, monitoring practices are conducted in just the opposite fashion. A

number of monitors enter staffs' work area without any acknowledgment of staffs' presence, conduct the monitoring and related recording, and then leave the work area without any interaction with staff. The latter format for conducting monitoring checks occurs for a variety of reasons, such as monitors not wanting to interfere with staffs' ongoing work duties. Regardless of the reasons, the impact on staffs' acceptance of the monitoring can be most detrimental.

In addition to common courtesy regarding *how* staff work performance is monitored, common courtesy relates to *when* monitoring is conducted. In outcome management, monitoring is intended to provide information to management about routine, day-to-day staff performance and attainment of consumer outcomes. In every human service agency, unexpected events occur in respective work stations that disrupt staffs' work routine. Any number of events can cause noticeable disruptions, ranging from a severe seizure by a consumer to a loss of electrical power and lighting. The net result of the events is generally the same — staff cannot perform their work duties in the usual fashion. If such disruptions occur during a monitoring session, there is typically no reason to continue with the monitoring because regular work activities are not occurring. More importantly, the disruptions often mean that staff are in a situation in which they could use assistance. The worst thing a monitor could do during these situations from a staff acceptability standpoint would be to continue monitoring; the best thing is for the monitor to disregard the monitoring and help staff handle the immediate situation.

Staff acceptance of having their work performance monitored by management can be enhanced by:

1) **informing staff of the rationale for the monitoring and the specific monitoring procedures prior to monitoring**

2) **providing feedback to staff about results of the monitoring *immediately* after the monitoring**

3) **using common courtesy during monitoring sessions**

Performance Monitoring with Support Team Members Who Are Not Agency Staff

The discussion on monitoring of work performance as one step in

an outcome management process for ensuring agencies successfully support consumers in attaining desired outcomes has focused on the job duties of staff working within the agencies. As noted repeatedly throughout this text though, successful implementation of individual service plans derived from person-centered planning also involves action steps taken by persons who do not work in human service agencies. Friends, family members, co-workers, and any number of neighborhood and community acquaintances of consumers are involved in person-centered planning and participate on individual support teams. Because participation of the latter support team members is integrally related to the success of person-centered planning, monitoring of their actions related to implementation of consumer plans is also an important outcome management component to operating a human service agency in a person-centered manner.

The involvement of people who do not work for a respective agency in the implementation of the agency's consumer support plans entails some important differences from the involvement of staff who are paid to work in the agency. The most apparent difference is that the former persons are volunteering their time to be a part of the person-centered process for a respective consumer. Volunteer involvement in the person-centered process based on interest in, and commitment to, the welfare of an individual with a disability is an essential part of the foundation of a true person-centered way of doing business. The interest and commitment demonstrated through the act of volunteering usually results in high levels of motivation for these support team members to carry through on implementing those components of person-centered plans for which the volunteers assume responsibility.

Because of the intrinsic motivation to perform person-centered support duties that is characteristic of people who voluntarily assume responsibility for implementing aspects of consumer support plans, monitoring of their activities related to implementing respective plans is usually not as much of an issue as with monitoring the quality of operations directly within a human service agency per se. Nevertheless, monitoring of support plan implementation is still a concern from the perspective of ensuring that desired outcomes of individual consumers are maximally attained. Actually, the act of volunteering itself requires a special concern for monitoring the quality of support provision that is somewhat different than the concerns related to

monitoring the job duties of human service personnel.

When human service staff have designated responsibility for carrying out aspects of consumer support plans, the staff are expected to perform relevant actions as part of their daily job routines. In contrast, support team members who do not work within the agency typically must provide their support functions in addition to their regular jobs. Hence, in many ways it can be more difficult for volunteer team members to arrange the time to provide the consumer supports that they desire to provide. It is therefore necessary to include some monitoring of the latters' support activities as part of the overall process of ensuring the proficient and timely implementation of consumer support plans.

The responsibility for monitoring supports provided by team members who are not paid personnel within a human service agency generally rests with the support team leaders. Of course, aspects of the monitoring can be shared across various team members provided the expectations for monitoring are clearly articulated. It is also part of the job of agency management to ensure that all aspects of consumers' person-centered plans are effectively implemented, which includes a shared responsibility for monitoring the activities of each support team member — including those team members who are not an explicit part of the agency's staff population.

The process for monitoring activities of volunteer support team members is much less formal and structured than that for agency staff performance, although no less important. Generally, the monitoring involves support team leaders and management representatives maintaining frequent contact with the volunteer representatives. Such contact should involve as much face-to-face interaction with the volunteers as realistically possible. Individual interactions can allow opportunities to hear from the volunteers regarding how things are going, identify obstacles to implementing support plans that agency personnel may be able to assist in overcoming, and to generally find ways to express appreciation and encourage the activities of the volunteers. Means of expressing appreciation and encouragement for volunteer participation in the person-centered process are similar in concept and application as those with agency staff, and are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 10

Supervising Staff Performance to Achieve Consumer Outcomes I: Positive Management Support

In preceding chapters emphasis has been placed on the importance of staff work performance relative to the quality of supports offered by human service agencies. To briefly reiterate, if agency staff do not perform their duties competently, then agency consumers are not likely to experience desired outcomes derived from person-centered values and practices. As also emphasized, it cannot be assumed that quality work performance will automatically occur among human service staff on a daily basis. Agency managers and supervisors must take active steps day in and day out to ensure that staff fulfill job duties diligently and proficiently.

The importance of effectively supervising staff work performance has been highlighted recently in agencies attempting to adopt a person-centered orientation. One of the most common obstacles to successfully operating a human service agency in a person-centered manner has been lack of follow-through on person-centered plans developed for agency consumers. Many agencies have enthusiastically developed comprehensive person-centered plans for respective consumers only to see the enthusiasm wane as little or no change in the consumers' lifestyles was observed. Important lifestyle changes expected to occur as a result of well-developed person-centered plans do not take place in large part because agency staff and other support team members do not complete those actions necessary for the plans to be fulfilled. In turn, agency management has not taken sufficient supervisory steps to ensure that staff and related team members adequately complete assigned responsibilities.

The purpose of this chapter is to present supervisory strategies for helping to ensure that human service staff fulfill daily work responsibilities. The focus is on how supervisors can effectively support staff in completing those duties that are necessary to implement person-centered plans for agency consumers. Although the strategies to be presented are discussed primarily in regard to paid agency staff, the procedures are also quite useful for supporting the involvement of other support team members who volunteer their time and effort within the person-centered process.

A common obstacle to operating a person-centered agency is lack of sufficient management action to ensure that agency staff and other support team members perform those duties necessary to assist consumers in achieving desired outcomes

Essential Criteria for Successful Supervision of Staff Work Performance

Numerous approaches to staff supervision have been popularized in the professional field over the last several years, and many of these approaches have been adopted to some degree in different human service agencies. Typically however, the newly adopted approaches for supervising the work performance of human service staff have not proven successful for very significant time periods. An examination of the failure of respective approaches to staff supervision usually indicates one of three reasons why a given approach was not successful. These reasons relate directly to the three criteria described in **Chapter 3** for successful management of person-centered human service agencies.

To be successful, staff supervisory approaches must be *effective, efficient,* and *acceptable.* In situations in which approaches to supervising staff work activity have not been successful, the approaches either: (a) were not effective in terms of changing and/or maintaining staff work performance sufficiently to ensure agency consumers achieved desired outcomes, (b) required too much time and effort on the part of supervisors to implement, or (c) were not well received by supervisors or staff working in the agency. In light of the importance of these issues for successfully supervising staff work performance, the strategies to be described in this chapter were specifically developed with an emphasis on effectiveness, efficiency and acceptability within human service agencies.

Supervisory Procedures that Set the Occasion For Proficient Work Performance among Staff

Ensuring that staff and other support team members sufficiently fulfill designated responsibilities to assist consumers in realizing the outcomes of person-centered plans requires the establishment of a work environment that sets the occasion for proficient work performance. Supervisors must make sure certain conditions are met within the work place *prior to* the point at which support personnel are

expected to engage in a particular work activity that relates to a consumer's person-centered plan.

Conditions that must be in place to set the occasion for proficient work performance have been discussed in large part in preceding chapters. For example, a primary condition is that desired outcomes for consumers derived from person-centered plans be well specified (**Chapter 5**). Relatedly, the work performances expected of support team members in order to assist consumers in realizing desired outcomes must be carefully articulated (**Chapter 6**). Staff must likewise be well trained (**Chapter 7**) in the work skills necessary for proficiently completing the specified work duties. Additionally, monitoring systems must be in place (**Chapters 8** and **9**) to provide accurate information regarding the degree to which staff and other support team members are performing duties satisfactorily, as well as the degree to which consumers are experiencing desired outcomes on a timely basis.

Because each of the aforementioned conditions has been described in-depth in preceding chapters, a discussion of each condition will not be repeated. The point of concern here is simply that these conditions must be met if a human service agency is to successfully support team members in performing consumer-related duties proficiently. It should also be noted though that these conditions in and of themselves do not guarantee that human service staff will perform their duties sufficiently to ensure that consumers realize desired outcomes at an acceptable level. Rather, the conditions must be in place and supervisors must also *respond* to staff work performances as well as the activities of other support team members in a manner that supports work of a high quality.

How Supervisors Can Respond to Staff Work Performance to Promote Optimal Attainment of Consumer Outcomes

From an outcome management perspective, how supervisors respond to staff work performance is the most important variable affecting a supervisor's success in ensuring that staff consistently perform work duties diligently and proficiently. In many ways, how supervisors respond to staff work activities is what differentiates an average human service agency from a high quality agency. However, although supervisory responses to staff work activity can make or break a quality human service agency, this aspect of supervision

customarily receives little attention in supervisory training programs. Relatedly, many supervisors go through the work day and week without any planned or organized approach to responding to the proficiency of staff work performance. Lack of systematic supervisory response to staff work activity represents a primary reason why many human service agencies have suffered through difficult times with problematic or otherwise unsatisfactory staff performance. Lack of adequate supervisory response to the performance of staff and other support team members also represents a primary reason why activities resulting from person-centered planning are not always completed sufficiently to effectively support consumers in attaining the outcomes specified in the consumers' person-centered plans.

How supervisors respond to staff work activity that affects attainment of consumer outcomes critically impacts the overall quality of an agency's supports and services

When considering how supervisors should respond to the activities of agency staff and other support team members, the first and most apparent factor to examine is how well or poorly respective personnel are fulfilling designated responsibilities. Satisfactory or highly commendable work performance requires a different set of supervisory responses relative to unsatisfactory work activities. This chapter discusses the former situation. **Chapter 11** describes recommended procedures regarding how supervisors should respond to unsatisfactory performance in order to improve such performance and to decrease the likelihood that unsatisfactory performance is repeated.

When staff perform work duties proficiently, it is important that staff feel good about what they have accomplished. Feeling good about one's ongoing work performance increases the likelihood an individual will continue to work in the same manner — in this case, working proficiently to assist agency consumers in attaining person-centered outcomes. It is the supervisor's job to respond to staffs' work performance in a way that helps staff continue to work proficiently and to feel good about their work activities. A variety of means exist through which supervisors can respond to staffs' work performance to accomplish such a goal. Before illustrating the various means though, several basic principles warrant mention that must be adhered to if supervisors are to successfully use the approaches to

support and maintain proficient work performance among agency staff, as well as to support the person-centered activities of other team members.

Basic Principles for Supporting Staff to Work Proficiently and Feel Good About Work Accomplishments

Motivating from a Positive Versus a Negative Basis. When supervisors respond to staff work performance such that staff work proficiently and feel good about their work activities, the supervisors are successfully establishing a *motivating* work environment. Despite extensive literature and discussion over what constitutes motivation in the work place, the essential basis of a motivating work environment is that the environment supports staff in working hard and enjoying their work.

When staff are indeed working hard and enjoying what they are doing on the job, then an all-win situation exists. Staff win because they are enjoying what they are doing in the work place. Consumers win because by working hard, staff are consistently providing the supports for consumers that an agency is intended to provide (i.e., staff are successful in assisting consumers in attaining desired outcomes based on the consumers' person-centered plans). Supervisors likewise win because when consumers achieve personalized outcomes through proficient staff performance, the supervisors are by definition successfully fulfilling their supervisory roles. Additionally, when staff are enjoying their work, a much more pleasant job environment exists for supervisors relative to when staff are displeased with their work situation. Any experienced supervisor knows the benefits of supervising staff who enjoy their jobs versus attempting to supervise staff who are frequently disgruntled.

When supervisors are successful in motivating staff to work hard and enjoy their work, then staff usually feel good about what they accomplish in the work place. In turn, the staff are likely to continue working proficiently. It should be noted though that such a model of staff motivation is by no means universal across human service agencies. Many staff approach their work duties not because they feel good when they fulfill the duties but rather, because they are apprehensive about what will happen if they do not complete expected duties. In the latter situations, staff work primarily to avoid the wrath of their supervisors or other negative consequences.

When staff are motivated to work because they are apprehensive about what will happen if they do not complete their expected duties satisfactorily, the staff are operating under a negative motivation model. Negative motivational models present numerous detriments to operating a quality human service agency, not the least of which is creation of an unpleasant environment for both staff and agency consumers. Such motivational approaches likewise fail to support staff in performing at their most optimal level — the approaches generally result in staff doing only the minimal amount of work required to avoid negative consequences. Hence, consumers do not receive maximum support in attaining person-centered goals and outcomes.

Additional problems with negative approaches to staff motivation are too many to discuss here. More in-depth discussion of such problems are available in the **Staff Motivation** section of the **Selected Readings**. For our purposes, the point is that negative approaches to motivation essentially always detract from successful supervision in the long run and should be avoided as much as possible. Our discussion will focus on positive approaches to staff motivation.

Successful motivation involves effectively supporting staff in working hard *and* enjoying their work

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Sincerity in Supervision. In order for supervisors to respond to staff work performance in a manner that supports staff in working hard and feeling good about work, supervisors must respond with *sincerity*. Supervisors must be sincerely concerned about how staff perform work duties.

In one sense, emphasizing sincerity in interacting with staff, or any support team members for that matter, would seem to be asserting the obvious. We nevertheless stress this aspect of supervision for one primary reason: responding to staff work performance in a way that helps staff continue such performance and feel good about work involves supervisors consistently expressing appreciation or approval for staffs' work activities. Receiving approval for one's actions on the part of staff is appreciated only if staff believe the approval is sincere. If supervisors are not truly appreciative of staffs' work activities, then attempts to express approval to staff generally will not be well received and will not enhance staffs' desire to work diligently

and proficiently. For reasons beyond the scope of this text, some human service supervisors simply are not consistently concerned with the ultimate quality of staffs' work performance. The latter supervisors essentially perform supervisory duties only to the degree that allows them to avoid negative actions on the part of their own supervisors or managers.

In the situations just noted in which supervisors are not sufficiently concerned with positively supporting staff, the strategies to be discussed for responding to staff in a manner that helps staff work hard and feel good about their work will at best be ineffective and at worst, counterproductive. Some discussion for working with such supervisory personnel will be presented in the following chapter. Suffice it to say at this point that to help staff feel good about their work, the supervisors themselves must feel good about staffs' work performance.

Supervisory Systems Approaches for Supporting Proficient Work Performance

As indicated previously, there are many ways in which supervisors can provide positive support to help staff and other team members work proficiently and feel good about their work. For organizational purposes, the different means can be categorized into formal systems approaches and less formal, naturalistic approaches. This section describes the systems approaches.

Formal systems approaches for supervisors to respond to staffs' proficient work performance stem directly from agency monitoring processes. As described in **Chapters 8** and **9**, systematic monitoring of the degree to which consumers achieve desired outcomes and staff perform job duties to assist consumers in experiencing the outcomes is an integral part of outcome management in person-centered agencies. Information stemming from the routine monitoring provides a regularly occurring basis for supervisors to respond to staffs' work performance.

The general process of using information from systematic monitoring of staff performance and consumer outcome attainment to respond to staff performance involves supervisors routinely reviewing results of the monitoring and denoting areas of successful performance. Successful in this respect means that the monitoring data indicate certain staff are performing their duties in the desired man-

ner and consumers are making progress in attaining designated outcomes. When the data indicate that various work performances are being successful, supervisors can use that information to positively support the work activity.

Optimally using the results of agency monitoring practices in the general manner just noted involves several specific steps. First and perhaps most obvious, supervisors must have a clear understanding of what represents acceptable work performance. This step is usually straightforward once person-centered plans are developed and duties have been identified for staff and other team members for assisting consumers in achieving outcomes specified in the plans.

The second step in using agency monitoring data to support staff work activities involves establishing a time schedule for reviewing the information obtained from different monitoring systems. How frequently monitoring data should be reviewed depends in large part on the frequency with which staff are expected to perform various duties as well as the frequency with which consumers are expected to achieve respective outcomes. In short, the more frequently the targeted events of the monitoring are expected to occur, the more frequently the data resulting from the monitoring should be reviewed. The guidelines described in **Chapter 9** regarding how frequently different monitoring systems should be implemented are also helpful for determining how frequently results of the monitoring should be reviewed. The objective is for a supervisor to review the results of monitoring at a frequency such that the supervisor is confident s/he has a sound awareness of how well staff are performing their duties in each designated performance area that relates to consumer goal attainment.

After a schedule for reviewing the results of various monitoring systems is established, the next step for using the information to support staff performance is to establish a regularly occurring means of responding to staff about results of the monitoring. One highly recommended means is to have staff meetings scheduled on a predictable basis with the sole purpose of reviewing the monitoring data with staff. The intent of the meetings is to commend and otherwise express appreciation for those aspects of staff work performance and consumer outcome attainment for which the monitoring data indicate things are going well.

In order to fulfill the goal of supporting staff work performance

and helping staff feel good about work accomplishments, it is important to ensure that the focus of meetings in which monitoring data are discussed is on the positive aspects of staff work performance. It is likewise important that discussions regarding commendable work performance explicitly relate the performance to its effects on assisting consumers in attaining outcomes identified in the consumers' person-centered plans. Relating work performance to progress in assisting consumers in achieving designated person-centered outcomes helps to keep staff — as well as supervisors —focused on the primary mission of the agency.

Adhering to a regular schedule for meeting with staff to commend success in assisting consumers in achieving desired goals has several advantages from the perspective of positively supporting staff work performance. A primary advantage is the process helps ensure that supervisors regularly express commendation to their staff. Supervisors in human service agencies have numerous responsibilities, many of which have little bearing on actively supporting staff to help consumers achieve person-centered outcomes. Hence, ongoing means of supporting staff work performance need to be built into the regularly expected duties of supervisors on a routine basis, such as with meetings to review monitoring data. Otherwise, supervisors tend to become engulfed in the myriad of other agency activities and forget or are unable to find the time to actively and consistently take positive steps to support staffs' work activities.

Taking specific actions to positively support proficient work performance among staff must be a routinely expected part of supervisory duties

A second advantage of adhering to a regular meeting schedule for commending aspects of staff work performance and consumer outcome attainment is that over time the process becomes a welcomed event for staff. Staff begin to look forward to the meetings because they know that aspects of their work that have been successful will be recognized. In turn, the regularly occurring recognition for the work can help staff feel good about what they are doing in the work place. Again though, it is important that the meetings stay focused on the sole purpose of commending work performance as it relates to consumer goal attainment. Supervisors must resist the urge to use the meetings to conduct other agency business. If the meetings begin to

involve other topics, the meetings will lose the desired impact of supporting staff performance for assisting consumers in attaining person-centered outcomes.

A third advantage of regularly occurring meetings for commending staff performance based on the results of agency monitoring is that the meetings provide face-to-face interactions between a supervisor and staff that are based on something positive. Face-to-face interactions are critical for allowing a supervisor to determine how well his/her expressions of appreciation are being received by staff. Such interactions also allow staff opportunities to discuss aspects of the monitoring with which they may have concerns or misunderstandings. As indicated in **Chapter 9**, face-to-face interactions are also a critical process for ensuring that other support team members adequately implement those aspects of consumer plans for which the latter individuals are responsible.

In contrast to the advantages of regularly occurring commendation meetings, a major disadvantage is that the meetings can be time consuming for supervisors. The meetings can also disrupt staffs' ongoing work duties with consumers. Consequently, it is recommended that supervisors not rely solely on the face-to-face meetings but rather, supplement the meetings with periodic written feedback involving commendation for work performance. The written information should occur on a regular schedule that is tied into the frequency with which the results of respective monitoring systems are reviewed.

Providing written feedback to staff concerning the positive aspects of their work performance generally involves less disruption in staffs' ongoing work duties relative to face-to-face meetings with supervisors. Written feedback can also be less time consuming for supervisors if the process for providing feedback on a given area of staff performance or consumer outcome attainment is well organized. Hence, it is helpful when designing monitoring systems that consideration be given to how results of the monitoring will be routinely summarized. When results of monitoring systems are clearly and concisely summarized, often relevant components of the written summary can simply be sent to staff along with brief comments added by the supervisor.

Informal Supervisory Approaches for Supporting Proficient Work Performance among Agency Staff

The systems types of approaches for responding to proficient work performance among staff as just described should become a routinely expected part of a supervisor's work activities. The appreciation and commendation provided to staff for efforts in assisting consumers in attaining person-centered goals through these types of systems can represent a regular, positive event in staffs' work lives. As such, these supervisory activities can play an important role in supporting staffs' work proficiency and helping staff feel good about their work. However, the formal supervisory response systems are not the most influential means of motivating human service staff from a positive perspective. Rather, more *informal* supervisory approaches for responding to staff work performance can have the greatest impact on staff motivation. Informal interactions are also the most useful means for supporting other, volunteer team members in fulfilling tasks associated with person-centered plans of consumers.

Responding to staff work activities in informal ways does not exclusively rely on data stemming from systematic agency monitoring of staff performance and consumer outcome attainment. Rather, informal response approaches are based on the everyday observations of staff performance a supervisor makes as part of the usual work routine. Informal response approaches are likewise not restricted to structured meetings with staff, but rely on those interactions between a supervisor and staff that tend to occur naturally during the typical work week as part of the usual job.

To use informal responses to staff work activities as a means of supporting proficient work performance and assisting staff in feeling good about their work, supervisors should be continuously observant of staff performance that warrants commendation. As with the more formal systems ways of responding to staff work activities, the work performance desired to be observed and commended should pertain to staff duties that enhance consumer progress toward desired outcomes identified in the consumers' person-centered plans. As is also characteristic of the more formal systems, informal supervisory responses to staff work activities must be sincere on the part of the supervisor.

Supervisors must be continuously looking for commendable work performance among staff that relates to assisting consumers in attaining outcomes derived from person-centered plans

Related to the issue of being sincere in expressing appreciation for staff performance, informal supervisory responses require effort by supervisors to *appear* sincere during interactions with staff. Some supervisors are quite sincere in appreciating the proficiency with which staff perform duties but experience difficulty in expressing that appreciation in a manner that comes across sincerely to certain staff. Difficulties in appearing sincere typically occur because respective supervisors have had little experience in commending staff for work performance, and the supervisors may feel awkward or uncomfortable attempting to praise desired work activity. As indicated previously, few supervisory training programs emphasize routine commendation for staff work performance, much less how supervisors should provide commendation for performance through daily interactions with staff. Relatedly, although expressing appreciation or commendation for desired work activities is simple in concept, actually fulfilling this crucial motivational requirement is not always an easy task.

Part of the difficulty in positively responding to staff work performance in a manner that successfully motivates staff is that supervisors have to individualize supportive responses across different staff. Everybody responds to praise from others a little differently, and what is well received or acceptable for one support team member may not be well received by another. In particular, many staff are not accustomed to supervisors praising their work performance, and may respond to such interactions with surprise, apprehension or even suspicion. Supervisors have to be especially observant of how each staff person responds to supervisory expressions of appreciation for work performance, and tailor future expressions of appreciation to the idiosyncratic likes and dislikes of each staff person. Supervisory ability to closely attend to the differential reactions of staff to the supervisor's expressions of appreciation, and to refine expressions based on those reactions, represents another important supervision skill that is rarely addressed in supervisory training programs.

When supervisors do attend closely to how respective staff respond to the supervisors' attempts to provide commendation for

work performance, typically the supervisors become more skillful in providing such commendation over time. As with any performance skill, proficiency in praising the accomplishments of others will usually improve with practice. Similarly, as staff become more accustomed to hearing supervisors commend their performance, the staff typically lose whatever misgivings they may have had with such supervisory actions and begin to receive the commendations more favorably.

In addition to acquiring skills to individualize expressions of appreciation, effectively responding to staff performance as a means of supporting staffs' work activities can be difficult from a practical standpoint. Supervisors in typical human service agencies often have problems finding the time to frequently observe and commend the work performance of their staff. A common characteristic of supervisory roles in human service agencies is that supervisors are charged with many and varied duties. A significant portion of such duties often entail administrative or paper-related activities that require a supervisor's time and presence in situations that compete with interacting with staff in the staffs' routine workplace. Hence, supervisors must actively schedule opportunities to focus on observing and commending staffs' work activities as part of the supervisors' routine day. The following examples illustrate ways experienced supervisors have found to merge opportunities to provide supportive comments to staff with other supervisory and administrative duties.

Return Messages in Person. Most supervisors almost always have various messages requiring a response. Whether such messages arrive over the phone, e-mail, or through interdepartment mail, the messages can represent important reminders to supervisors to look for staff performance to commend. The crucial factor in such situations is that supervisors should attempt to respond to as many of the messages from staff as possible *in person*. Responding to messages in person serves two important supervisory functions. First, and most obvious, the function of responding to the message is fulfilled. More importantly from a motivational perspective, when the supervisor goes to the staff work area to respond to the message, an opportunity is created for the supervisor to commend staff performance that is observed in the work area or that was observed at some previous time. Responding to staff messages in person is also a supervisory activity that many staff appreciate from the supervisor in and of itself.

Saying Good Things about Performance Behind Someone's Back. Although there are distinct advantages to face-to-face interactions for commending staff performance as noted earlier, there are also other opportune times to commend specific performances when face-to-face situations do not immediately exist. One such time is during interactions in meetings or other group situations. Supervisors can use various interactions with groups of staff to commend the performance of a staff person who is not present in the immediate group. We call this means of supporting staff work performance as *saying good things behind the back.*

There are two notable advantages of commending someone's work performance when that person is not present. First, when a supervisor praises work performance that relates to assisting consumers in attaining person-centered goals, the supervisor is actively demonstrating for the people who are present what type of staff performance is highly valued. Such a process represents a small but important means of stressing the mission of the agency — to work to assist consumers in attaining desired outcomes as identified in the consumers' person-centered plans. Second, the commendation expressed during the meeting or group interaction invariably comes to the attention of the staff person who is not at the meeting but whose performance is being commended. The informal communication network among agency staff in many ways is more effective for disseminating information than more formal chains of communication. Once the staff person hears through the informal grapevine that a supervisor was expressing satisfaction with specific aspects of the staff person's job performance, the event can help the staff person feel good about work accomplishments.

Begin Every Meeting By Commending Some Aspect of Someone's Work Performance. A key component of systems approaches for supporting staffs' proficient work performance noted earlier is conducting regular meetings with the sole purpose of praising staff performance that, based on formal monitoring data, enhances consumer progress in attaining person-centered outcomes. There are of course many other types of meetings that supervisors in human service agencies frequently attend that involve one or more of a supervisor's staff. The latter meetings can also represent opportune times to support staff work performance while simultaneously addressing other agency matters. To help supervisors consistently use

various meetings as an opportunity to commend staff work performance, a useful guideline is to begin each meeting by always commending some aspect of staff work performance, regardless of the primary purpose of the meeting. As with saying good things behind a staff person's back, beginning meetings by commending staff work activities related to assisting consumers in realizing desired outcomes serves the dual functions of supporting staff work performance and focusing the attention of people at the meeting on the agency's primary mission.

Taking Home the Goods. A common workplace cliche is that one should be careful about taking work home. Such a concept actually means that taking the *bad* aspects of work home, such as anger over seemingly unfair events, can be detrimental to one's overall quality of life. However, taking *good* things home can be quite beneficial. A supervisor can help a staff person leave work feeling good about the job by interacting with the staff person to express appreciation for the staff person's work immediately before the individual leaves for the day. When one of the last things that happens to a staff member before leaving work for the day is hearing something nice about his/her work performance, then if the staff person thinks about work while at home the staff member usually feels good about that aspect of the job. Hence, a supervisor should try to leave time at the end of a respective work shift or day to go to a given staff person's workplace with the sole purpose of expressing appreciation for something the staff person accomplished during the day or week related to consumer attainment of person-centered outcomes.

Returning to the Scene. At times, supervisors will observe admirable work activities among certain staff but cannot immediately interact with staff to commend the performance. In particular, interacting with staff at that moment in time may interfere with the staff person's ongoing activity, such as an interaction with a consumer. Supervisors are also likely at other times to observe commendable performance but not have the time themselves to immediately stop and interact with the staff person. In both of these situations, one means for supervisors to utilize the observations as a basis for supporting staff performance is *returning to the scene.*

Returning to the scene simply involves the supervisor going back to the staff person's work station at a later time during the day or week with the sole purpose of commending the staff person's work

performance that was previously observed. Although immediate feedback is usually most effective in terms of affecting staffs' future work performance, as well as usually being preferred by staff relative to delayed feedback, providing commendation or feedback in a delayed fashion as just noted can still have an important impact on staffs' motivation. Actually, in some cases this type of delayed commendation can have a heightened effect on supporting staff in feeling good about work activities because the staff can be quite appreciative of the supervisor for taking the time to return to the work area just to commend the staff person's previously observed performance.

Commending Staff Performance during Difficult Agency Times. Almost every human service agency experiences difficult times during its existence. Difficult times may be due, for example, to financial constraints that result in staff layoffs or delays in hiring to fill vacant positions, reductions in services, and general expectations of agency staff to do more work with fewer resources. During such times, work conditions for staff can become rather unpleasant, often accompanied by anxiety over possibly losing one's current job and discontentment with management over the presumed cause of the difficult times. In these types of situations, work productivity frequently suffers, with the end result of agency consumers receiving decreased support in fulfilling their person-centered plans.

When things seem to be going less desirable than usual in a respective agency, such as during difficult times as just illustrated, supervisors should be especially vigilant in regard to finding time to observe and commend proficient staff performance. Increasing attempts to express appreciation to staff for work activities during difficult agency times has several important benefits. First, by deliberately increasing efforts to commend staff for their work performance, supervisors are less likely to fall into the usual trap that occurs during difficult agency times of actually decreasing approval interactions with staff. That is, without conscious efforts to avoid such, supervisors can become disgruntled along with staff and spend more time complaining with staff about agency conditions and less time supporting staff in helping consumers attain outcomes identified in the consumers' person-centered plans. Hence, supervisors should use periods of difficult times as a signal that more and not less attention should be directed to supporting staff.

During difficult agency times supervisors should increase their efforts to positively support proficient work performance among staff

A second benefit of supervisors providing more commendation for proficient work by staff during difficult agency times is because of the potentially increased motivational impact such actions can have during those times. When the work environment is noticeably less pleasant than usual, by definition that means that there are fewer good things occurring in staffs' work lives than what typically occurs in the work environment. The generally decreased level of good events can have a contrast effect for a supervisor's sincere expressions of appreciation to respective staff for their work performance. The positive nature of the commendations tends to stand out in contrast to the existing negative aspects of the work situation. As a result, the supervisor's commendations can have a more potent effect than usual for helping staff to continue to work proficiently and to feel good about work accomplishments.

A third effect of increasing praise for work well done during difficult agency times relates to a supervisor's self-motivation. As just alluded to, difficult agency times can cause unpleasantness for supervisors and detract from the supervisors' own motivation to work hard and enjoy their work. By increasing work-approving interactions with staff, supervisors can decrease some of the negative effects of the difficult agency times on themselves. When an individual is feeling somewhat disgruntled and then engages in an interaction in which the individual expresses appreciation to someone else, typically the disgruntlement tends to decrease. Feeling disgruntled and expressing sincere approval to someone are incompatible events — one cannot continue to feel as much discontent while s/he is doing good things for another person. Hence, the more supervisors are able to express appreciation to staff during difficult agency times, the less likely supervisors are to be bothered by the ongoing agency situation.

Case Study #2: Working Concepts

(Continued from Chapter 6)

Less than one year after initiating a more person-centered way of doing business at Working Concepts, Mr. Millington wanted more information on exactly how new policies and practices were impacting supported employees and staff. He began dropping in on employees during their break at work to ask them if they were satisfied with the services they were receiving from their job coaches. He began asking job coaches and the job developers to bring person-centered maps to weekly staff meetings to share preferences and dreams characteristics and compare them with characteristics of jobs that were actually attained. After only a few job site visits and staff meetings, he found many opportunities to give staff feedback about positive examples of person-centered behaviors as well as many opportunities to provide corrective feedback, along with opportunities for team problem solving.

Supporting Staff Performance with Written Feedback

Methods for supporting proficient staff performance in assisting consumers to achieve the outcomes derived from person-centered plans discussed to this point have focused on face-to-face, verbal interactions between supervisors and staff. Many of the same procedures are also relevant for providing commendation for staff performance, as well as the activities of other support team members, in written format. Written appreciation for work accomplishments can be expressed by supervisors using formal letters and memoranda, informal notes, e-mail, special cards, and any number of other means of providing information in writing (see **Staff Motivation** section in **Selected Readings** for resources describing specific types of written feedback and commendation).

Expressing appreciation for staff work performance in written form has several advantages. Most importantly, the written commendation can serve as a permanent product for staff to maintain over time if they so choose. As such, sometimes the written commendation means more to individuals than a supervisor casually mentioning how well a staff person has performed. In some situations providing written commendation also can be more time efficient for a supervisor relative to providing commendation during face-to-face interactions with individual staff persons. To illustrate, a supervisor can schedule

a certain time period during the work week to write brief notes to various staff persons whom the supervisor has observed engaging in work that actively supports consumers making progress on their person-centered plans. Instead of locating each staff person in the staffs' respective work station as required for a face-to-face verbal interaction, the supervisor can simply send the notes through inter-agency mail.

In contrast to the advantages of expressing commendation for staff work performance in written format, there is one major disadvantage. As just noted, reliance solely on written commendation does not involve face-to-face interactions between a supervisor and staff. As such, all the advantages specific to commendation presented during verbal interactions as mentioned previously are lost when using written commendation. It is recommended that supervisors rely primarily on face-to-face interactions with staff and other support team members to express appreciation for successful implementation of consumers' person-centered plans. Periodic written expressions of commendation should be used as a secondary means to support performance related to person-centered planning by supplementing and not replacing face-to-face, verbal interactions.

Chapter 11

Supervising Staff Performance to Achieve Consumer Outcomes II: Corrective Management

In the preceding chapter, supervisory methods were described for responding to the work performance of human service staff and other members of person-centered teams. The focus was on responding in a manner to support and maintain *quality* work performance that is promoted through the initial steps of outcome management. It has also been consistently noted that the component procedures of outcome management do not always result in satisfactory work proficiency among all staff in a given human service agency. When staff work performance is not of sufficient quality to adequately support consumers in attaining outcomes derived through person-centered planning, then supervisors must alter how they respond to what staff are doing in the work place.

The likelihood of supervisors having to respond to inadequate staff performance is minimized if the initial steps of outcome management are followed as described in preceding chapters. Nevertheless, supervisory response to inadequate performance is a critical part of an outcome management approach to operating human service agencies in a person-centered manner. If human service agencies are to maximally support consumers in attaining outcomes identified in the consumers' person-centered plans, then areas of staff performance that fall below quality expectations must be remediated. It is incumbent upon human service supervisors to respond quickly and effectively to improve work performance of unacceptable quality. Responding to inadequate performance among staff represents the final component step of outcome management — that of *corrective management*.

Corrective management is essentially a three-faceted process. First, supervisors must be readily aware of when the performance of respective staff falls below expected standards. Awareness of problems with staff performance usually occurs quickly if the initial steps of outcome management and person-centered planning have been followed. Particularly important in this respect is the specification of duties expected of staff and other team members that are necessary to support consumers in attaining person-centered outcomes, and the

routine monitoring of those duties and outcome attainment. Second, supervisors must possess an attitude that poor quality work will not be tolerated. Lack of tolerance for nonproficient job performance usually exists if supervisors have been well trained in the values and practices of person-centered planning. As discussed throughout this text, consumer goals and dreams identified in person-centered plans are rarely achieved if support personnel do not perform their human service roles proficiently.

The third facet of corrective management involves supervisors taking quick action to change staff performance observed to be inadequate. Supervisors must actively work to change or *correct* the problematic performance. Although the importance of correcting or improving inadequate work performance is conceptually straightforward, the actual process requires supervisors to respond to staff work activities in a knowledgeable and skillful manner. The purpose of this chapter is to describe how supervisors can use corrective management strategies to respond to, and improve, inadequate work performance among human service staff.

The corrective management strategies to be described in the remainder of this chapter pertain primarily to improving the performance of staff who are paid employees of a given human service agency, and especially as that performance relates to proficient implementation of person-centered plans of agency consumers. However, the principles upon which the strategies are based also pertain to improving the person-centered activities of volunteer members of consumer support teams, although the application of the principles varies somewhat with the latter individuals. Means of improving person-centered related activities especially relevant to the performance of nonpaid, volunteer team members are described in the final section of this chapter.

Successful corrective management requires supervisors to maintain an awareness of performance problems, refuse to tolerate work of poor quality and effectively apply performance improvement strategies

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Setting the Stage for Corrective Management

Before discussing how supervisors can use corrective management to remediate problematic work performance among staff, the

importance of using positive management practices warrants reiteration. In **Chapter 10** the benefits of promoting and supporting staff work performance, as well as the performance of other support team members, from a positive versus a negative management perspective were noted. In short, relative to negative management strategies, positive management approaches result in higher levels of motivation among support personnel along with more consistent, high quality work.

Routine reliance on positive managerial strategies is also of benefit when supervisors are faced with responding to work performance among agency staff that is below expected standards. Most apparently, using positive management approaches in contrast to negative strategies usually results in fewer problems with staff performance. Hence, supervisors do not have to respond as often to problematic work activities if the supervisors consistently approach supervisory duties in a positive manner. A less apparent but nonetheless important benefit is that an overall positive approach to supervision enhances the effectiveness of corrective procedures when such procedures have to be used to improve performance.

The impact of a positive management style on the efficacy of corrective management procedures is due to a type of *contrast* effect. Corrective management procedures by their nature almost always entail some negative aspects for staff. The negative features exist because all corrective strategies include information presented in one format or another to staff indicating that certain work performances are unacceptable. Generally, as the negative aspects involved in corrective management strategies become more severe or punitive, the undesirable side effects on staff attitudes and work performance become more serious (see previous discussion in **Chapter 10** regarding multiple effects of negative managerial procedures). It is therefore advantageous to use the least amount of negativism necessary to bring about changes in staff performance.

When a supervisor has consistently used positive supervisory strategies with staff on a day-to-day basis, the supervisor does not need to be overly negative when correcting staff performance. A minor degree of negativism incorporated within corrective procedures suffices because the negative aspects, albeit minor, stand in contrast to the supervisor's usual, positive supervision style. The contrast causes the minor negative features to stand out and attract

the attention of staff relative to the supervisor's typical routine. As such, the efficacy of the negative aspects for improving staff performance is heightened relative to the situation in which supervisors regularly rely on negative practices, and in which staff are accustomed to negativism in the work place. In the latter situation, negative aspects as part of a corrective management procedure simply appear as routine events for staff and solicit little staff attention.

How the contrast effect just described specifically reduces the amount of negative action a supervisor must use to correct inadequate staff performance will be illustrated later in this chapter. The primary point here is that by relying on positive management strategies along the lines described in **Chapter 10**, the effectiveness of corrective management strategies is increased considerably. Staffs' acceptance of supervisory corrective actions also is significantly enhanced. In short, routinely practicing positive management not only reduces the possibility that corrective action will be needed, but when such action is necessary, increases the likelihood that the action will be successful and appropriately received by staff.

Responding to Inadequate Work Performance among Staff

In order for supervisors to respond to inadequate work performance in a manner that effectively corrects the performance problems, supervisors must be able to determine the overall reason for the work deficiencies. Generally, inadequate work performance among human service personnel occurs for one or more of the following three reasons: 1) staff do not know how to perform expected duties, 2) staff do not have time to perform respective duties proficiently due to too many competing responsibilities, or 3) staff are not sufficiently motivated to complete work duties adequately. Appropriate response to staff work problems on the part of supervisors depends on which of these reasons has resulted in inadequate performance.

When staff are not performing work duties adequately due to not knowing what is expected or not knowing how to perform expected tasks, then the effective supervisory response entails clearly specifying staff duties as described in **Chapter 6**, or providing performance-based training as presented in **Chapter 7**, respectively. Resolving staff performance problems due to the second reason such problems exist — that of not being able to complete certain duties because of too many competing work tasks — is usually a more difficult process than

specifying job expectations or providing performance-based training. In the latter situation, appropriate management and executive staff must carefully review the existing expectations of staff and determine how staffs' work load can be made manageable.

Staff performance problems due to having too many duties to realistically perform in a quality manner is a relatively common occurrence in a number of human service agencies. Such problems tend to increase as agencies adopt a person-centered way of doing business because of new and more varied work duties expected of staff. The problems that arise in this respect though really should not be considered as *staff* performance problems; the problems are with the organization and management of the agency.

Revising work operations to ensure that staff have sufficient time to fulfill expected work duties related to implementing person-centered plans of consumers can involve any number of strategies. Some of the more typical strategies include, for example, clearly prioritizing work expectations regarding what is most important to complete at a given time, decreasing consumer caseloads assigned to respective staff, reassigning certain duties to other agency staff, and obtaining additional resources. To discuss all of the various correctional strategies is beyond the scope of this text. The issue is raised here simply as a caution against taking corrective management action involving negative sanctions with problematic work performance when the problems are beyond staffs' control. Human service personnel should not be held responsible for duties that cannot be realistically fulfilled, and it is management's responsibility to ensure work assignments are realistic.

The third primary reason for staff performance problems, that of insufficient motivation to work diligently and proficiently, is generally the most pervasive reason for poor quality work among staff employed in human service agencies. The remainder of this chapter describes how supervisors can respond in such situations to effectively correct performance problems. Again though, the procedures to be described typically are effective only to the degree that positive management strategies for promoting and supporting quality staff performance are routinely practiced in respective agencies.

Supervisory actions to correct staff performance problems usually must address:

1) a lack of knowledge or skills among staff regarding how to perform respective work tasks, 2) insufficient time for staff to complete certain tasks due to too many competing responsibilities, and/or 3) inadequate motivation to work diligently and proficiently

There are two general ways in which supervisors can respond to performance problems when staff know what and how to perform expected duties, and the necessary resources are available to adequately complete work duties, but staff are nevertheless performing inadequately. The two ways are represented by *formal* and *informal* response systems.

Formal Supervisory Response Systems for Correcting Inadequate Work Performance among Staff

Most human service agencies have some type of formal response system for supervisors to use with performance problems among staff. Typically referred to as disciplinary action procedures, these systems generally involve a least-to-most negative or punitive approach. Initial problems in performance are responded to with minimal negativity, such as with an informal verbal counseling with a staff person whose performance is less than adequate. If the verbal counseling is ineffective, then a more negative or serious action is taken such as with a formal written reprimand that becomes part of the staff person's personnel file. If performance problems continue, then the ultimate negative disciplinary action may eventually be used, that of termination of the staff person's job. Of course, for very serious performance issues such as sleeping on the job or consumer abuse, the less punitive actions are bypassed and corrective action begins with more punitive sanctions (see later section on **JobTermination** for elaboration).

Disciplinary action systems as just summarized can be an effective means of correcting inadequate work performance if the systems are used as intended. However, misuse of disciplinary action systems is rather frequent in many human service agencies. Such misuse seriously impedes the effectiveness of disciplinary procedures for improving staff work performance. The following sections describe the most common mistakes made with disciplinary action systems that

impede effective remediation of staff performance problems.

Lack of Supervisor Knowledge of Disciplinary Action Systems. One reason for ineffective applications of disciplinary action systems in attempts to correct performance problems is that supervisors are not well informed of the various rules that govern the use of such systems. Part of the problem in this regard is that the written rules and regulations governing disciplinary action systems are often cumbersome, difficult to read and open to conflicting interpretations. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon supervisors to be thoroughly familiar with the disciplinary action systems affecting their agency.

Numerous problems result when supervisors are not familiar with an agency's disciplinary action system. One of the most common problems is that different supervisors, as well as individual supervisors, implement a respective system inconsistently. Inconsistent implementation may involve, for example, a supervisor taking different types of action for the same problem displayed by different staff persons (e.g., one staff person's first offense of sleeping on the job results in a final written warning whereas the first offense of another worker results in immediate firing). When disciplinary action is implemented inconsistently, then staff become unclear as to what the organizational consequences for performance problems are likely to entail. Lack of clarity regarding the consequences for poor work performance decreases the effectiveness of a disciplinary action system for correcting performance problems. Equally importantly, inconsistency with disciplinary action leads to disgruntlement among staff due to perceptions of management unfairness, which subsequently erodes staff motivation to work diligently and proficiently.

Another impact of inconsistent use of disciplinary action systems is that staff can have a given action overturned or reversed. Disciplinary action systems are typically designed to allow supervisors to correct performance problems *and* to protect the rights of staff from unfair management practices. One of those rights usually involves staff appealing various types of disciplinary action. If supervisors have been inconsistent in using disciplinary action, then staff frequently win the appeal to have the action removed or altered, even if the action was justified in that particular case. When disciplinary actions on the part of supervisors are not upheld on appeal, the effectiveness of the supervisors' future attempts to correct performance problems is diminished.

Related to inconsistent use of disciplinary action due to supervisors' lack of knowledge regarding relevant rules and regulations is inappropriate use of disciplinary action. Most disciplinary action systems specify what type of action is warranted for performance problems of varying severity. If a supervisor is unaware of these specifications and does not follow the rules accordingly, the action invariably is overturned on appeal, and often justifiably. As just noted, frequent reversal of disciplinary actions erodes the effectiveness of the overall system.

In order to avoid inconsistent and inappropriate use of disciplinary action, supervisors must become thoroughly familiar with an agency's disciplinary rules and regulations immediately upon assuming the role of a supervisor. It is especially important for supervisors to be knowledgeable about how the rules and regulations apply to day-to-day performance problems —problems that impede duties necessary to implement person-centered plans of the agency's consumers. It is also wise if supervisors regularly refer to the rules and regulations before initiating any type of disciplinary action with staff.

Lack of Supervisory Follow Through with Disciplinary Action. Another problem with supervisory use of disciplinary action is lack of follow through once such action is initiated. As indicated previously, most disciplinary action systems are designed to be progressive in nature if the first type of action implemented does not result in improved performance. At times supervisors will initiate disciplinary action but not continue with the progressive system even though a respective staff person's performance does not improve. Lack of follow through is due to such factors as supervisors being too busy to closely attend to the performance in question or withholding successive disciplinary action procedures in order to avoid negative interactions or confrontations with staff.

Regardless of the reason for failure to follow through with disciplinary action once initiated, the result is that the lack of follow through detracts from the effectiveness of such action in the future. Lack of follow through in essence makes the application of the disciplinary action system inconsistent, with the subsequent problems as described previously with inconsistent use of disciplinary action. Failure to follow through with disciplinary action also means that the staff person is continuing to perform unsatisfactorily in the

work place. In brief, if disciplinary action is initiated, supervisors must continue with appropriate action until the designated work performance improves to a satisfactory level.

Lack of Upper Management Support for Supervisory-Delivered Disciplinary Action. Sometimes supervisors are quite diligent in applying disciplinary action in accordance with all appropriate rules and regulations, yet the action is reversed by the supervisors' superiors. Executive personnel typically have the authority to overturn disciplinary action in most agencies. At times the reasons for reversing such action are legitimate and appropriate — supervisors like anyone else can make bad decisions. At other times though, reversing disciplinary action taken by supervisors occurs for reasons of a more questionable nature. In particular, some agency executives prefer to avoid having to deal with staff disgruntlement that the action is likely to evoke. Regardless of the reason, if disciplinary action taken by supervisors is frequently reversed by upper management, the ultimate impact is to reduce the effectiveness of the supervisors' use of such action for improving staff performance.

In some situations, what upper management does in regard to supervisor application of a disciplinary action system is essentially out of the supervisors' control. However, supervisors can minimize the likelihood of having disciplinary action reversed by carefully informing upper management prior to taking such action. It is usually beneficial for supervisors to inform agency superiors about the problem with a given staff person's performance, along with what the proposed disciplinary action will be, before the action is administered. In this manner supervisors are more likely to obtain the support of upper management for the respective action. Alternatively, if the supervisors' superiors disagree with the proposed action (which makes it likely the action will eventually be overturned), the action can be withheld in order to avoid subsequent reversal and erosion of the supervisors' future effectiveness in using disciplinary action. In the latter cases, supervisors can turn to other means of attempting to improve inadequate work performance, such as through informal response approaches.

Effective use of disciplinary action systems requires supervisors to be thoroughly familiar with all relevant regulations governing such systems, accurately and consistently follow the regulations, and obtain upper management support prior to taking specific actions

Informal Supervisory Approaches for Responding to Inadequate Work Performance Among Staff

In contrast to relying on formal disciplinary action procedures, informal response approaches for inadequate work performance focus on using more routine, everyday types of interactions between a supervisor and staff. The format for using informal response approaches to problematic work performance is similar to that described in **Chapter 10** for providing on-the-job, positive feedback to staff to support quality work. To reiterate briefly, a supervisor must have frequent contact with, and observations of, a respective staff person's ongoing work performance. When inadequate performance is observed, feedback — in this case, corrective feedback — can be provided to the staff person either immediately or shortly thereafter.

A useful guide for providing informal corrective feedback is the protocol described in **Chapter 7** for presenting feedback as part of staff training procedures. On the following page is a simplified version of the feedback protocol that can be used for informal supervisory responses to inadequate work performance. The corrective feedback protocol is advantageous because it structures the interaction between the supervisor and the staff person. Such structure helps ensure that the supervisor focuses on providing information that is sufficiently specific to allow the staff person to be fully aware of what must be done in order to perform a designated duty in a satisfactory manner.

Another advantage of the protocol just noted for providing corrective feedback is that the protocol helps ensure that positive or commendation statements about a staff person's work performance are provided along with descriptions of performance that warrants improvement. When positive comments are included as part of the corrective feedback process, the interaction with the supervisor is less unpleasant for the staff person relative to interaction approaches that focus exclusively on inadequate aspects of the staff person's performance.

It is generally recommended that informal feedback procedures such as the protocol just illustrated be used by supervisors in attempts to correct inadequate performance before applying more formal, disciplinary action procedures. Informal feedback approaches should be initially tried because typically the approaches require much less

time on the part of the supervisor than formal disciplinary action, yet the approaches are often equally if not more effective than disciplinary action. Additionally, informal feedback approaches usually have considerably less aversive features for both the staff person and supervisor than formal disciplinary action strategies.

PROTOCOL FOR PROVIDING CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK AS PART OF ROUTINE, ON-THE-JOB SUPERVISORY INTERACTIONS

1. **Begin interaction with positive statement regarding some aspect of the staff person's performance**
2. **Specify what aspects of the work performance are incorrect or insufficient**
3. **Describe what should be done to improve the performance**
4. **Solicit questions from the staff person**
5. **Inform the staff person when observations and discussion regarding the specified performance will next occur**
6. **Conclude the interaction with a positive or encouraging statement**

Formal disciplinary action procedures typically should be applied only after the informal, on-the-job feedback interactions have occurred at least two or three times without improvement in staff performance. Sound feedback strategies always incorporate several interactions between a supervisor and staff person before concluding that the strategies are not effective. Step 5 of the corrective feedback protocol just illustrated reflects that the initial interaction in which a supervisor provides corrective feedback to a staff person should be followed by at least one more interaction. The latter interaction provides an opportunity for the supervisor to indicate whether the staff person's designated work performance has improved satisfactorily, or to specify what else needs to occur with the performance to bring it to an acceptable level. Successive feedback interactions are intended to support a staff person who is attempting to improve a

particular area of performance, but simply requires more time or practice before the performance reaches the desired level of proficiency.

Special Considerations when Using Corrective Management

Corrective management strategies represent a critical part of an overall outcome management approach for ensuring that agency staff consistently perform work duties in a quality manner for implementing person-centered plans of consumers. However, various types of corrective actions taken by supervisors, whether formal or informal, represent one of the most frequently misapplied or misused supervisory strategies in all of management. Misapplication of strategies intended to correct inadequate staff performance renders the strategies ineffective in most cases. At times, misapplications also lead to more problems with staff performance than what existed prior to the managerial action intended to correct respective problems. The latter problems are typically due to the negative impact such procedures have on staff, and staffs' subsequent reactions to the supervisory procedures. The following sections present several special considerations when using corrective management strategies that can help ensure that the procedures are used effectively, as well as reduce the likelihood that staff will respond in a negative or generally counterproductive manner.

Private Versus Public Corrective Management

A critical rule for presenting corrective feedback that includes negative components regarding inadequate job performance is that the feedback should be presented privately to a respective staff person. The feedback should not be presented in view or earshot of other staff persons, other support team members or consumers in the staff work area. Relatedly, corrective feedback directed to an individual staff person should not be presented during staff meetings involving groups of staff.

The rationale for providing corrective feedback privately versus publicly is straightforward: publicly presented information containing negative information about someone's performance is usually much more unpleasant for the staff member relative to the information being provided privately by the supervisor. There are numerous effects that can occur when negatively related feedback is presented in a public forum, and essentially all of the effects are deleterious for

staff morale and motivation. The detrimental effects occur not only with the targeted staff person, but also frequently with other staff who are present and eventually, the consumers with whom the staff interact. The **Selected Readings** section on **Supervisory Feedback Procedures In Outcome Management** provides numerous references to the undesirable impact of negative feedback presented publicly. Suffice it to say here that supervisors must take the time to meet with a staff person individually to provide corrective feedback or disciplinary action if the outcome of the supervisors' efforts is to improve work performance and avoid an increasingly problematic situation.

Maintaining Professionalism and Focus During Corrective Management

Throughout all procedures involved in corrective management, and particularly with disciplinary action, it is important that supervisors maintain a professional focus on the reason for the procedures. Supervisors must remember that the purpose of corrective management is to improve inadequate staff performance in order to ensure an acceptable level of quality in the supports provided for agency consumers. All too often, supervisors lose sight of the purpose of corrective action and become involved in an adversarial confrontation with the staff member to whom the corrective management procedures are directed.

Adversarial confrontations between a supervisor and staff person occur frequently during corrective management applications because of the negative or punitive features often involved in this type of supervisory activity. A common scenario leading to confrontation involves a staff person viewing the action of the supervisor as punitive or unwarranted, and responding in a negative, and frequently emotional, manner. The supervisor interprets the staff person's response as being personally directed at the supervisor, which in turn causes the supervisor to become upset with the staff person. The supervisor's displeasure with the staff person at that point basically has no direct relationship to the work performance that initiated the interaction in the first place. Rather, the supervisor's displeasure is related to the staff person's current negativism directed toward the supervisor.

The result of the scenario just described is that the supervisor becomes focused on the staff person's interactions with the supervi-

sor, and perhaps the staff person him/herself. Subsequently, a type of power play develops between the supervisor and staff person, with each individual trying to obtain the upper hand in a personal, adversarial confrontation. The confrontation frequently continues, at least periodically, for considerable time periods. Meanwhile, issues directly related to the staff person's inadequate work performance receive decreased attention, with little or no improvement in the staff member's ongoing work.

In order to avoid counterproductive confrontations that can arise during corrective management procedures, supervisors must stay focused on the performance issues of concern and not on any negative reactions of the staff person that arise during respective interactions. When a supervisor maintains a professional demeanor during such times and focuses on improving the specific performance area of concern, if a confrontation does develop then it is usually of a relatively minor and short-lived nature.

Corrective management procedures must be implemented in a private and professionally focused manner by supervisors

Pairing Positive Management With Corrective Management

Another means through which the negativism often associated with corrective management can be reduced is by pairing positive management practices with the corrective management strategies. Throughout this chapter it has been emphasized that positive management strategies should be soundly in place before corrective management procedures are used. In the context of concern here, positive management also should be practiced *simultaneously* during implementation of corrective management procedures. If a supervisor continues to practice positive management strategies while implementing corrective management actions, the supervisor is ensuring that all of the benefits of a positive supervisory style as discussed in this and preceding chapters are maintained on a consistent basis.

A useful guideline to help ensure that positive supervisory approaches are practiced while taking corrective action is to present positive feedback to a staff member whenever corrective feedback is provided to another person. That is, every time a corrective management procedure is implemented regarding inadequate work performance, a supervisor should make sure that on the same day explicit

commendation is provided for someone's work performance directed at following through on a consumer's person-centered plan. This rather simple strategy represents an effective reminder to supervisors to focus on positively supporting desirable work performance, even when some less than desirable performance must be addressed.

When Corrective Management Requires Job Termination

As stressed throughout this text, outcome management is designed to support and motivate human service staff such that agencies effectively assist consumers in realizing their dreams and desires in conjunction with person-centered principles and practices. As one step in the outcome management process, corrective management is intended to accomplish one of two alternatives when the other, preceding outcome management steps have not resulted in quality work among certain staff. The first and most desirable alternative is to improve the performance in question. Once improved, then the satisfactory performance can be supported and maintained with other outcome management applications. The second alternative is to remove respective staff from an agency whose performance does not improve satisfactorily despite skillful and sincere supervisory efforts.

Removing staff persons from an agency through job termination is one of the most difficult supervisory tasks when attempting to operate a human service agency in a person-centered manner. The process is obviously detrimental for the quality of life among the staff who are fired, at least on a temporary basis. The process is also unpleasant for the responsible supervisor. Not only is the supervisor aware that a staff person's life is being seriously affected, but the supervisor frequently experiences other unpleasant effects. In particular, a common phenomenon when a supervisor terminates a staff person's job is that many of the staff person's co-workers express a negative view of the supervisor for taking such drastic action. Many supervisors have experienced the derogatory views of co-workers when one of their colleagues has been fired by the supervisor.

The negative impact on an agency's staff when a co-worker is fired from a job can be minimized if it is readily apparent to staff that the co-worker's job was terminated explicitly because the individual was not performing in an acceptable manner. It is most important to make it clear that the staff person's performance was detrimental to the agency's mission of providing person-centered supports and services.

When it is apparent that a staff person's job was terminated because the staff person was not adequately fulfilling work duties, many staff tend to develop respect for the responsible supervisor. Staff often acquire respect for a supervisor who is willing to take a hard stand and dismiss a staff person who is not performing designated work duties. The latter effect among staff generally does not replace the initial dissatisfaction with a supervisor for firing one of their colleagues but rather, develops after the dismissal process has passed. Regardless of the impact on other staff though, at times a supervisor has no choice but to dismiss an employee for failure to complete designated duties related to implementing person-centered plans of consumers.

From an outcome management perspective in person-centered agencies, firing a worker represents a failure on the part of management. Having to let a staff person go due to unacceptable work performance means a supervisor was unable to effectively change or adequately support the worker's performance. However, the management of staff performance in the workplace is by no means a perfect technology, and failures do occur. The important point is that supervisors must recognize the failure and remove the staff person from the human service agency. In person-centered agencies, a supervisor's job exists to ensure that staff effectively perform those duties necessary to support consumers in attaining their personal goals. When all reasonable supervisory efforts fail to enable a staff person to fulfill work expectations, the supervisor cannot allow consumer lives to be detrimentally affected by permitting the worker to continue providing poor quality supports and services. Hence, at times supervisors must be able to effectively terminate a job.

Effectively terminating a staff person's job requires specific knowledge and skills on the part of a supervisor. The necessary knowledge and skills are basically the same as those previously described with other aspects of corrective management. Specifically, supervisors must be thoroughly familiar with the agency's disciplinary action rules and regulations pertaining to job termination, the supervisors must carefully follow the rules, and the supervisors should ensure that agency superiors are in agreement with the job action prior to initiating termination procedures.

Job termination as a given type of disciplinary action requires especially strict adherence to relevant rules and regulations relative

to other types of disciplinary action. Ensuring compliance with all appropriate guidelines is particularly important with job termination because this type of disciplinary action typically is scrutinized at several managerial or administrative levels. In large agencies and state-operated programs for example, many offices are likely to review a job termination action, with any singular office having the capability of impeding or reversing the action if it seems to be out of compliance with a given regulation. In some agencies, various administrative offices seem to actually look for ways to stop or overturn a job termination action. The tendency to withhold support for job termination occurs because of potentially negative repercussions to the agency when a staff person is fired, such as an appeal by the staff person, filing of a law suit against the agency, negative media coverage, and serious union conflict.

In addition to the unpleasantness and administrative obstacles to job termination, in many agencies there are a number of protective mechanisms for employees that make job termination difficult. Protective mechanisms such as civil service regulations and union contracts are designed in large part to protect employees from unfair management practices. Such mechanisms serve many beneficial functions. However, whether intended by design or not, a deleterious effect of various protective mechanisms is that the safeguards can impede or prevent the termination of staff whose performance seriously detracts from the quality of consumer supports offered by an agency.

The various difficulties in effecting job termination in human service agencies have lead to two major developments that have hindered the quality of human service provision in the United States for decades. The first development is that supervisors and executives in human service agencies avoid job termination action except for highly selective types of performance problems. A review of reasons for job termination in human service agencies, and especially in government-operated settings, reveals that the vast majority of job dismissals have occurred due to discrete activities of a highly irregular nature that would not be acceptable in society in general much less on a job. Problems most frequently resulting in job termination include, for example, consumer abuse, substance abuse on the job, and theft of agency or consumer property.

In contrast to the rather notorious performance problems just

noted, very few dismissals have been due to a basic lack of quality in routine day-to-day job performance. To illustrate, few people are fired for continuously failing to teach effectively, for repeatedly interacting with consumers in an unpleasant manner, for frequently ignoring consumers' requests or social interaction attempts, or for failing to assist consumers in participating in functional treatment activities on a regular basis. There is no question that the former types of activities resulting in job termination are clearly unacceptable in human service agencies. From the point of view of providing quality supports for assisting consumers in achieving person-centered outcomes though, the latter types of activities should also be considered unacceptable. Due in large part to the difficulties in effecting job termination that have developed over time in the human service field, and especially in the publicly funded arena, daily work performance of a consistently poor quality frequently does not result in job termination but is simply ignored or tolerated.

A second, and related development, of the difficulties of enacting job termination in many human service agencies has been pervasive acceptance of the view that staff *cannot be dismissed for poor quality job performance*. Many supervisors and agency management personnel have essentially succumbed to the difficulties seemingly inherent in job termination and have concluded that the system will not support dismissal of staff due to poor performance on the job. Many agency executives likewise have come to the conclusion that the benefits of removing a staff person from an agency for nonproficient job performance simply are outweighed by the difficulties in pursuing job termination.

Management attitudes that mitigate against trying to dismiss employees who routinely perform subpar work are understandable in many ways. The difficulties existing in quickly terminating staff jobs can be numerous and pervasive. However, there have been sufficient numbers of human service managers who fail to accept such views, and who do indeed remove staff who do not fulfill performance expectations, to prove such attitudes inaccurate. The latter personnel can be found in those agencies that provide consumer supports of the utmost quality year in and year out. We strongly support the values and efforts of such individuals, and espouse the view that poor quality work performance cannot be tolerated in human service agencies. Experience has clearly shown that through

application of outcome management in conjunction with person-centered values and practices, staff who repeatedly engage in poor quality work despite sound supervisory corrective actions can and should be removed from human service jobs.

Corrective Management with Volunteer Support Team Members

As indicated previously, the focus of this chapter has been on using corrective management to improve the performance of staff who are paid to work in a human service agency that is attempting to operate in a person-centered manner. As also noted earlier, successful implementation of person-centered plans requires the effective involvement of support team members in addition to paid agency staff, including relatives, friends and any number of community acquaintances of consumers. At times, the activities of the latter team members warrant improvement if person-centered plans are to be successfully implemented.

The principles of corrective management as summarized in this chapter also pertain to improving the activities of support team members who are not paid agency staff but rather, volunteer their time to participate in the person-centered process for respective consumers. How the principles of corrective management are applied though can vary considerably when considering participation of volunteer team members relative to applications with paid agency staff. This chapter section describes how corrective management can be applied to improve the person-centered activities of volunteer team members when such activities warrant improvement.

The first step in applying corrective management with volunteer team members is essentially the same as that with staff who routinely work within a human service agency: the reasons for problems the volunteers have in carrying through with designated person-centered activities must be determined. However, whereas problems with agency staffs' implementation of person-centered plans most frequently relate to work environments that fail to sufficiently motivate the staff, problems with implementation activities among volunteer team members are due to insufficient motivation much less frequently. As discussed in **Chapter 9**, people who volunteer to participate in the person-centered process without having any paid, employee type of relationship with an agency usually have a high degree of motivation to actively support a respective person with a

disability.

When implementation activities of volunteer team members are not of the nature necessary to effectively support consumers in attaining their person-centered outcomes, typically the reason for the implementation problems relates to one of two factors. First, the team members do not have adequate information about their designated responsibilities or lack know-how regarding how to fulfill the duties. Second, the team members lack sufficient time or resources to adequately fulfill the responsibilities. Consequently, corrective management applications designed to improve the activities of volunteer team members must usually address one or both of these areas.

In **Chapter 9** the importance of support team leaders and agency supervisors having frequent face-to-face interactions with volunteer team members was stressed in order to maintain awareness of how the team members were proceeding with their designated duties related to implementing person-centered plans of consumers. Such interactions are also critical for identifying reasons why volunteer team members may be having trouble fulfilling their person-centered duties. Support team leaders and supervisors who are responsible for overseeing implementation of person-centered plans should have particularly frequent interactions with team members when problems with plan implementation seem to be occurring.

To ensure volunteer team members are successful in implementing aspects of consumers' person-centered plans, team leaders and agency supervisors responsible for overseeing plan implementation must have frequent, face-to-face interactions with each volunteer team member

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When problems with implementation of person-centered plans are apparent, team leaders and supervisors should interact with volunteer team members in a general problem-solving process. The interactions should focus initially on what obstacles exist to completing various activities for which the team members are responsible, and then on collaboratively identifying possible means of overcoming the obstacles. Team leaders and supervisors should be especially vigilant about determining additional information that may need to be provided to the team members in order to allow the members to adequately carry out their designated duties. Team leaders and supervisors should also be prepared to identify additional resources or

other support team members who may be able to help in fulfilling respective responsibilities expected of a given volunteer.

The general problem-solving process just described should be continued until it becomes clear that the designated implementation activities of volunteer team members are being effectively carried out. If the problem-solving process is consistently adhered to by team leaders and supervisors, most problems with volunteer implementation of person-centered plans will be corrected. In those cases where the process is not successful, it is incumbent upon team leaders and supervisors to find another way to implement the specific aspects of the consumer plans for which a volunteer team member was responsible — which usually means another support team member will have to assist in, or assume primary responsibility for, the implementation process.

Chapter 12

Final Considerations: A Review and Trouble-Shooting Guide For Agencies Adopting Person-Centered Planning

Throughout this book we have emphasized the importance of viewing person-centered planning as a mechanism for identifying and attaining outcomes desired both by individual consumers and entire human service agencies. By now it should be evident that while seeking resources to support consumers in attaining desired outcomes, person-centered planning teams will almost always need to change the way human service agencies do business. Likewise, the larger systems in which human service agencies operate will usually require change.

In many cases, changes needed in order for human service agencies to function in a person-centered manner will require nothing more than listening to a consumer's dreams, and then supporting the consumer in identifying and using the supports necessary to realize those dreams. For example, simply listening to a consumer who says he wants to own a home and live by himself instead of in a group home might result in referral to a nonprofit, affordable housing service. The latter service could help the consumer secure the low-interest mortgage loan, down payment and closing cost assistance necessary to purchase a home. Similarly, attending to a consumer whose nonverbal behavior indicates to direct support workers that she wants country music instead of rap music, pudding instead of ice cream, and work time spent packaging materials instead of completing janitorial duties might result in the purchase of new music selections, reorganization of dinner menus and re-assignment of consumers and staff in the agency's vocational department.

The illustrations just noted indicate how a support team in a respective human service agency can make certain changes in agency operations in order to implement person-centered plans of agency consumers. Support teams frequently are able, for example, to arrange changes in job assignments of selected agency staff, alter necessary paperwork and re-interpret or re-write policies and procedures necessary to support consumers in realizing their desires. Such duties are likely to be successfully completed because membership of each consumer's person-centered planning team would regularly include

one or more people in key agency positions who have the authority to make necessary changes in agency operations.

Person-Centered Planning as a Systems-Change Tool

As more and more teams listen and respond to individual consumers and then support each consumer in attaining desired outcomes, changes in the operations of human service agencies will occur one consumer at a time. In this manner, person-centered planning can function as a systems-change tool. In the first illustration in the preceding section for example, teams and agencies can learn that home ownership may be an attainable option for any consumer who desires to own a home (although it is of course neither necessary nor desirable to refer all consumers with certain characteristics to affordable housing resources). The next time a consumer served by that particular agency expresses interest in owning a home, the home ownership process is likely to take less time because agency staff will have become more familiar with the necessary procedures to support home ownership. The relevant paperwork as well as policies and procedures will have been tested and revised where necessary. In the second illustration, teams and agencies are likely to learn that assessing individual consumer preferences and offering choices can be desirable for all consumers affected by the agency, although specific choices offered should be tailored to each consumer's individual preferences. Hence, agencies begin to regularly assess and respond to preferences among all of their consumers.

In the types of cases just illustrated, the process of attaining desired outcomes of individual consumers will drive organizational changes. Such changes may simply, but powerfully, result in desired outcomes for one specific consumer, or may result in wide-spread changes that positively impact many agency consumers. Either way, the need for organizational and systems change arises from a consumer-directed need.

Harnessing the Power of Person-Centered Planning

From a person-centered and outcome management perspective, wide-spread organizational changes that result from the process of supporting a consumer in attaining outcomes derived from the consumer's plan are the most desirable agency changes. The most powerful outcomes for people with disabilities will result when individuals, their families and communities join resources with those

of human service agencies and organizations to facilitate the planning process. In contrast, person-centered planning teams will be much less effective when they conduct activities in isolation of strategically planned agency and systems change efforts. The full power of person-centered planning is harnessed when agencies use stories of real people to pose systems-change questions and actively pursue person-centered solutions. In short, agencies must link desired consumer outcomes with desired agency outcomes.

How consumer and agency outcomes must be linked together in order for an agency to change to a person-centered way of doing business is illustrated by considering the following types of questions. As a result of the outcomes our agency has accomplished with Abdul, a new homeowner, what have we learned about our agency? What is working? What is not working? What new, more desirable outcomes do we need to pursue? As a result of changing Anjelica's schedule to allow her more choice-making opportunities and more time to access preferred activities, what have we learned about our agency? What is working? What is not working? What new, more desirable outcomes do we need to pursue? Basing organizational changes on answers to these types of questions is in direct contrast to more traditional systems-changes approaches that pose questions such as what policy and procedural changes warrant study or implementation before implementing a new, person-centered service option. Establishing a clear link between desired consumer and agency outcomes is a critical first step in harnessing the power of person-centered planning.

The full power of person-centered planning is harnessed when agencies change operations in response to lessons learned from supporting one consumer at a time in attaining individually desired outcomes

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When agencies use an outcome management approach to help attain desired consumer and agency outcomes, the power of person-centered planing will be even greater. As seen throughout this book, an outcome management approach provides a systematic means of addressing the staff development and management issues necessary to ensure that members of consumer support teams successfully fulfill responsibilities to affect maximum attainment of desired consumer and agency outcomes.

Effective staff development and management is a critical component of systems change. However, these activities are not the only components — systems change is highly complex. True systems change is characterized by dynamic variables impacting multiple levels of an agency. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss how the values, principles and procedures of person-centered planning can be used to accomplish large scale systems change. Several issues involving person-centered planning and outcome management discussed in previous chapters that relate directly to effective systems change will be reviewed. Additionally, how to avoid the most common systemic breakdowns and issues associated with adoption of person-centered planning will be described.

Case Study #1: Bloomfield

(Continued from Chapter 8)

Bloomfield's steering committee met monthly for its first year. During this time period, committee members revised the IHP development guidelines to reflect more person-centered assessment and meeting practices and revised the IHP form to include space for a "Dream Statement".

The steering committee also invited three unit managers to attend each meeting to present the maps and progress of one pilot individual. Following the case presentation, the steering committee asked the unit manager to take the committee members through a "What's Working and What's Not Working" map for each individual. As a result of this process, the steering committee was able to identify systemic issues that were not working and pursue some very person-centered systems change strategies. For example, IHP development procedures were revised to allow an individual to choose who he or she wanted to attend a planning meeting. Individuals and their families were encouraged to use a problem-solving technique, a negotiable and a non-negotiable map, with other team members to reach agreement about IHP goals. A small number of cars were leased to enable staff to drive individuals to and from community recreation activities. An agreement was developed with a recreation center to train staff and to provide supports to individuals interested in joining classes or using the facilities. The steering committee wrote and disseminated case study pamphlets describing the stories of the first pilot group and the lessons learned. Lastly, they began the development of a consumer satisfaction study.

During its second year, the steering committee began meeting quarterly. Bloomfield continued person-centered planning with the initial pilot group of 25 individuals and expanded services to an additional 25 individuals. The expansion required a repeat of the staff development efforts and the delineation of veteran staff from the first year's pilot as "mentors" to the newer trainees.

Guidelines for Addressing Systemic Issues

Train Staff and Provide Technical Assistance

Staff development has been addressed in detail in earlier chapters.

To briefly reiterate, a comprehensive plan of staff development is essential to the successful adoption of person-centered values and skills. Such a plan includes staff training and technical assistance, and sets the occasion for effectively monitoring, improving and maintaining staff work performance necessary to ensure desired consumer outcomes are attained. Comprehensive staff development also serves as a foundation for successfully addressing other issues in the systems-change process.

Convene a Steering Committee

Convening a steering committee or task force may occur concurrently with the design of a staff development plan, and especially if the staff development plan is being designed by personnel within the target agency. Alternatively, the establishment of a steering committee may be an outcome of the staff development plan. Either way, establishing a multi-constituency committee comprised of managerial and direct support workers as well as family members, consumers and other advocates is an important initial step in the systems-change process.

The purpose of a person-centered steering committee is to oversee and support the adoption of person-centered values and activities within the agency or community of interest. To accomplish its purpose, the committee will need to meet frequently and for an extended period of time — often on a monthly basis for a period of at least two to three years. The exact frequency of a committee's meetings and the tenure of its existence will be determined by consumer-directed needs and the corresponding goals of the committee (see subsequent chapter sections for elaboration).

Careful attention must be given to the membership of the steering committee. Membership must include people with relevant technical skills and knowledge (e.g., knowledge of person-centered planning and local resource availability such as Medicaid waiver services or adult education and employment options) as well as people who control budgetary resources and make policy. The membership must also include people with teaming skills, including effective communication skills and meeting facilitation skills. Relatedly, team membership must involve persons with leadership skills that include the ability to dream, set future visions and creatively pursue dreams. Finally, the steering committee must involve people who are part of the system at all levels such as administrators, middle managers and direct service workers,

along with people who are not part of the system but who are nevertheless impacted by the system. The latter persons include families, individuals with disabilities, volunteers and advocates.

The size of the committee must also be taken into consideration. Although the committee must be large enough to be inclusive of all key stakeholders, the committee must be small enough to function effectively as a team. Some teaming literature suggests that the "ideal" team is one composed of an average of five members. If the guidelines of inclusivity just noted are followed though, rarely will a person-centered steering committee consist of as few as five members. On the other hand, if as many as 20-25 members are identified as key players, the committee will be much too large to function effectively. In the latter case it may be necessary to initially identify all potential team members and then cluster where appropriate. For example, if a community-wide committee is being established, is there one provider agency that can represent all relevant providers? Is there one parent who represents a family organization with a community-wide focus? If, after the clustering process has been used to reduce the committee's size and the membership is still more than 12 to 15 members, an alternative arrangement may be to identify a core group of 12-15 members to meet monthly and a resource group of the remaining members to meet as needed with the core group.

Another consideration in establishing a person-centered steering committee is the development of a values and mission statement. The committee must adopt a values statement that reflects the values inherent in a person-centered approach. The committee likewise must adopt a mission statement that illustrates the committee's purpose within the agency in regard to person-centered planning activities. Examples of purpose or mission statements agencies have found useful when adopting a person-centered way of doing business are illustrated below.

Examples of Person-Centered Values and Mission Statements

The purpose of the Pineview Steering Committee is to oversee, support and evaluate the transition of individuals with developmental disabilities from Pineview to supported living opportunities within communities of their choice.

The mission of the Madisonville County Person-Centered Planning Task Force is to provide training, problem-solving and evaluation for all residential and vocational providers throughout the county.

Along with the adoption of a values and mission statement to guide committee activities, the steering committee must articulate a few clear and elevating goals. These goals simply state what the committee plans to accomplish within a specified period of time. Whereas values and mission statements anchor a committee, goals can motivate a committee to take action. A committee's goals should be clearly stated, measurable and attainable. Examples of common goals adopted by agencies as part of the person-centered systems-change process are presented below.

Examples of Steering Committee Goals when Adopting Person-Centered Planning

Train all case managers, QMRPs and direct support workers in person-centered values and practices by the end of April.

Using the newly revised assessment process, develop person-centered IHPs for all consumers in Residence A before the end of the year.

Initial steering committee goals may be established following completion of a needs-assessment activity such as through use of the instrument included in the **Appendix.** Once agreed-upon by committee members, the goals should be used by the committee to form agendas for meetings and to determine action steps during and between meetings.

As an agency's person-centered planning activities begin to unfold, the steering committee's training and process goals will be completed and new goals derived from consumer-driven systems issues will need to be set. An example of the latter type of goal is: "Because Goodwill, the Arc and Community Options together identified 12 consumers who want to purchase their own homes within the next two years, this committee will seek to establish an agreement with Madisonville Bank to set aside eight mortgages from their affordable lending program each year for individuals with developmental disabilities served by these three agencies." Another example is: "Because our work with Trey, Luis and Tawanda showed us that the use of preferences maps identifies the vocational desires of individuals with very severe disabilities more appropriately than traditional vocational assessment methods, this committee will establish

a set of guidelines and a reimbursement mechanism to enable supported employment providers to conduct person-centered vocational assessments."

The shift to more consumer-driven goals will be enhanced if the committee follows two guidelines. First, the committee must establish a communication feedback loop between person-centered planning teams and the committee. Committee members must request information from person-centered planning teams on systems barriers that the teams encounter. The information must be discussed at steering committee meetings and be used to answer the types of questions posed earlier in this chapter (i.e., As a result of the outcomes being accomplished, what are we learning about our agencies and local systems? What is working? What is not working?). Second, and relatedly, the committee must be familiar with and responsive to individual consumers' dreams and stories. There must be a mechanism for the steering committee to stay abreast of the results of person-centered planning team activities. Generally, if a feedback loop is established between person-centered planning teams and a steering committee, it is easy to agree upon a format and time line for having support team members attend steering committee meetings to briefly present one or more consumer cases at the beginning of each meeting.

Person-centered steering committees must be aware of and responsive to barriers encountered by individual support teams, as well as individual consumer dreams and desires

Implement a Pilot Project

When first considering the adoption of a person-centered way of doing business, most agencies want to begin implementing activities with every consumer immediately. Such an approach is not advisable for at least two reasons. First, staff will need time to practice and refine their skills with, for example, new intake procedures and use of mapping as an assessment tool. Likewise, consumers and family members will need time and support in assuming new or enhanced leadership roles as members of person-centered support teams. Several meetings are usually needed to bring all of the consumer's support team together and to gather new and different assessment and planning data. For these and other reasons as reflected in preced-

ing chapters, person-centered planning meetings will initially require more time than traditional consumer planning meetings.

A second reason it is not advisable to initially begin person-centered planning with all of an agency's consumers is that planning forms and procedures (e.g., IHP forms and procedures for IHP development) may need to be revised to become more person-centered. Traditionally, a steering committee might consider revising the forms and procedures with subsequent implementation with an agency's entire consumer group. The forms and procedures would then be finalized after the process is completed within the agency. A number of months at a minimum is often required to complete the entire process. In the meantime, consumers, families and staff will likely experience confusion and frustration about which forms to use and which procedures are current. Hence, many agencies that have made a commitment to adopt a person-centered way of doing business have found it more useful to begin with a small, pilot group of consumers and staff. Revisions to forms and procedures are then made only if barriers are identified with the pilot group that can be resolved through such revisions. In general, we have found that a pilot group of approximately 25-35 consumers seems to be small enough to be manageable by an agency's staff, yet large enough to allow a variety of issues to arise for the steering committee to consider.

A pilot group may be selected by choosing a diverse group of consumers (e.g., by age, gender, disability type, support needs). Alternatively, a pilot group may be selected by first choosing target groups of staff such as case managers, teachers and unit directors to participate in staff development activities and then in turn, the identified staff choose one or two consumers to initiate the person-centered process. Another option for initiating the person-centered process is to pilot person-centered planning activities with all individuals whose regular program plans come up for re-development during a given time period. Yet another option is to pilot person-centered planning with all of the consumers from a given service unit within an organization. There are relative advantages and disadvantages to each of these options depending on the size of the agency and the scope of services provided. Hence, final decisions must be made on an agency-by-agency basis by the steering committee.

Once a pilot group of consumers has been identified, the steering committee must define a framework for staff to follow to implement

the pilot process. The framework must address questions about staff roles, procedures, tools, timelines and data to be collected for monitoring. It may take a steering committee several meetings to formulate such a framework.

Throughout the pilot work with person-centered planning, two caveats should be considered. First, all issues to be addressed and processes to be implemented must be clearly explained to consumers, their families and staff. If the establishment of the steering committee is concurrent with the delivery of the staff development program, guidelines may be given to staff as one component of their training. If the steering committee is an outcome of staff development activities, staff must be brought together after their training to learn about the pilot project, to have the opportunity to ask questions and offer suggestions, and to commit to the defined procedures.

A second caveat with the pilot process is that procedures must be sufficiently detailed to ensure staffs' attention to person-centered values, systematic use of relevant person-centered tools, clearly articulated expectations regarding services and supports to be delivered, and collection of monitoring data. On the other hand, pilot procedures must be flexible enough to remain person-centered.

Providing sufficient operating structure while simultaneously allowing flexibility can be a difficult process. For example, in an effort to attend to person-centered values, one agency made a decision that no person-centered planning meeting could be held without at least one family member present. A different agency developed a written policy requiring all person-centered planning meetings to be held away from the agency's residential campus. Another agency decided to require the development of a preferences and dream map for every planning meeting, to require the development of a background map upon referral to the agency with five year updates, and to require the development of a relationships map every two years.

Although well-intentioned, each of the policies just exemplified diminishes the power of person-centered planning. The policies represent a systems approach to agency operations in contrast to a person-centered approach. To illustrate, instead of mandating who attends each person-centered planning meeting, participants should be determined by the consumer and the support persons who know each consumer best. Likewise, the consumer and the support persons who know the consumer best should identify and select a preferred

setting for the meeting in contrast to developing an all-encompassing agency policy regarding meeting location. Relatedly, instead of an agency policy dictating specific mapping procedures to use at all person-centered planning meetings, consumers and their support teams should choose which maps to develop based upon the questions the team needs answered and the wants and dreams articulated by the consumer. The steering committee could then recommend specific maps to be developed in response to specific assessment questions.

Policies and procedures to be used with the pilot person-centered project must be *detailed* enough to ensure staffs' attention to person-centered values, systematic use of tools, clear expectations regarding delivery of supports, and collection of monitoring data — while being *flexible* enough to remain person-centered

A critical but frequently overlooked step among steering committees when implementing a pilot project is identification of desired outcomes of the project. Desired outcomes must be specified and attainable through the policies and procedures being piloted and within the timelines established for the pilot process. In addition, outcomes should be directly related to the steering committee's value and mission statement as well as the committee's goals. Outcomes also should result in changes both in the lives of consumers (desired consumer outcomes) and in agencies (desired staff and agency outcomes).

Desired outcomes of pilot projects can be many and varied. Such variety is well illustrated with the identified outcomes of one community agency that recently committed to adopting a person-centered way of doing business. The desired outcomes identified by this agency for its two year pilot project included: 1) the development of 35 individual person-centered plans, 2) observable and measurable attainment of desired outcomes for each of the 35 pilot individuals, 3) all direct care staff trained in and performing person-centered practices, 4) an observable and measurable increase in family and consumer participation in planning meetings, 5) an observable and measurable increase in community member participation, 6) an observable and measurable increase in use of generic services and supports, 7) a compilation of success stories disseminated to key

families and policy makers, 8) a list of policies, procedures and legislation that needed to be changed and a mechanism for addressing the changes, 9) an agreed-upon plan form and procedures for development and, 10) a plan for expansion beyond the 35 pilot individuals.

Evaluate the Results

Evaluation of pilot activities and outcomes is essential not only to the pilot's success but also to expansion beyond the pilot group. Monitoring and evaluating person-centered activities has been addressed in detail throughout this book (see especially **Chapters 8 - 11**). The same procedures discussed in preceding chapters for monitoring and evaluating attainment of desired consumer and agency outcomes during full-scale implementation of person-centered planning activities also apply to monitoring and evaluating outcomes during implementation of pilot activities.

Although the steering committee usually must assume some responsibility for overseeing monitoring activities for evaluation purposes, the ultimate responsibility of ensuring attention to agreed-upon monitoring duties rests with agency directors and supervisory staff. Monitoring data related to the pilot project should be used by the steering committee and agency administrative and supervisory personnel to make decisions about sustaining pilot activities as well as expanding activities beyond the pilot group.

WHEN ESTABLISHING A PILOT GROUP TO BEGIN PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING, THE AGENCY STEERING COMMITTEE MUST DEFINE THE FRAMEWORK AND PROCESS THAT ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING:

How will attention to person-centered values be monitored?

What guidelines will be used to identify and invite staff to person-centered planning meetings?

What guidelines are recommended but not required?

Are there any tools such as specific maps that must be used?

What outcomes are expected from the pilot activities?

How and when will case studies and outcome data be presented by the steering committee?

What timelines will be established for the pilot process?

How will the pilot process be evaluated?

Disseminate the Results

Periodically throughout the pilot project, and especially as the pilot project concludes, the steering committee should oversee dissemination of results of pilot activities. Dissemination of results accomplishes many purposes but is especially useful for informing staff, consumers and families who are not involved in the pilot project about the ongoing person-centered activities and outcomes. Dissemination also allows person-centered successes to be shared and to heighten awareness about challenges that must be met. An additional benefit of disseminating results of pilot activities is that the process serves as a vehicle for continued staff development. Directing staff attention to results of person-centered pilot activities can reinforce application of desired practices among staff and keep new staff abreast of person-centered values, practices and outcomes.

Develop a Plan for Expansion

Although use of a pilot project can be an effective way for a human service agency to begin person-centered planning, it must be remem-

bered that pilot activities are only an initial step. It is not enough to demonstrate initial success on a pilot basis — pilot activities identified as successful through objective monitoring and evaluation must be sustained and expanded to the entire agency population. The human services literature is awash with examples of highly successful pilot projects addressing various issues that ended because of lost funding, administrative changes or staff fatigue and loss of enthusiasm. The premise of this entire book, and especially the outcome management approach as detailed in **Chapter 3**, is that successful activities can be identified, sustained and expanded through systematic attention to the values and practices of person-centered planning in conjunction with the component steps of outcome management.

Throughout the pilot project, the steering committee should use data resulting from pilot activities to consider sustainability and expansion needs and desired outcomes. For example, data on frequency and length of person-centered team meetings can be useful in considering whether to expand pilot activities to 10, 20, 30, or more consumers each year. Such data can also be useful for guiding decisions about new job duties for direct support staff and caseload assignments. Data on staff performance during the pilot project can be useful for determining a need for changes in amount or type of supervisory support and corrective management action. Data on barriers and challenges faced by consumers and direct support staff as they pursue desired outcomes can be used to address changes in how funding is assigned to various service options within the agencies. For example, the percentage of funds directed toward supported employment versus sheltered employment should be based upon the relative percentages of consumers who express a desire for each of these employment options.

To date, there are limited data available on sustainability or expansion of person-centered planning initiatives (see **Selected Readings** on **Person-Centered Models**). The data that are available though suggest a number of indicators of successful adoption and maintenance of person-centered planning on an agency-wide basis: 1) comprehensive staff development with subsequent supportive and corrective management action, 2) administrative buy-in, 3) identification of issues and barriers by direct support staff with sincere responses by administrative personnel and/or multi-constituency steering committees, 4) basing agency funding and policy decisions

on monitoring data related to attainment of desired outcomes, 5) commitment to flexibility in funding, staffing and interpretation of policies and procedures and, 6) consistent dissemination of individual success stories. Each of these indicators has been addressed in various parts of this book.

Harnessing the power of person-centered planning requires an agency to tackle systemic issues at multiple levels: 1) train staff and provide technical assistance, 2) convene a steering committee, 3) implement a pilot project, 4) evaluate results of the pilot project, 5) disseminate results of pilot activities and, 6) develop and implement a plan for expansion of services beyond the pilot project

Case Study #3: Independence County

(Continued from Chapter 5)

The Independence County person-centered task force quickly recognized that in choosing 75 individuals with whom to pilot person-centered activities they had set an ambitious goal. A review of desired outcomes for the 75 pilot individuals yielded five task-force goals: 1) to establish an agreement with a local lending institution to support loans for low-income individuals with disabilities, 2) to establish an agreement with the county housing authority to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to low-income individuals with disabilities, 3) to establish conversion incentives for those employment programs currently providing limited supported employment opportunities, 4) to establish an initiative for school-to-work transition efforts that eliminated placement on waiting lists, and 5) to pursue changes in the state's Medicaid waiver program to allow more consumer and family choice in control of funds and selection of personal care attendants.

After much discussion, the 15-member task force decided to divide into three working groups, each of which would address a specific issue identified by the county's person-centered planning activities. The three working groups focused on: 1) supported employment, 2) home ownership, and 3) Medicaid waiver revisions. Resource members were assigned to the most appropriate work group. Over the next year the task force met quarterly as a full body and each work group met more frequently to develop an action plan and implement identified strategies.

Common Breakdowns in Implementation Of Person-Centered Approaches

Agencies attempting to bring about changes in existing systems in order to adopt a person-centered way of doing business must be mindful of the many potential breakdowns. The following sections discuss some of the more common breakdowns that have occurred in the implementation of person-centered planning approaches across different human service agencies. These breakdowns have occurred during pilot efforts as well as during expansion of pilot activities to a larger consumer population.

Maps Become the Goal Instead of a Means to Achieving Consumer Outcomes

The most common pitfall of person-centered planning occurs when support teams and agencies bring people together to share experiences and develop maps for consumers but then fail to provide the leadership, supervision and resources to assist consumers in realizing their dreams. Support teams often become heavily involved in the new ways of conducting assessment and planning and leave person-centered planning meetings with considerable excitement. Such excitement soon wanes however as team members embark on the day-to-day and week-to-week work required to implement the new plans. The initial excitement is further diminished as team members encounter barriers in implementing respective plans and agency management fails to adequately assist team members in fulfilling their new responsibilities.

Critics of person-centered planning who scoff at the idea of making significant changes in peoples' lives through maps and drawings with brightly-colored pieces of paper fail to realize that person-centered planning is much more than maps. Maps are only one tool to pull out of the person-centered planning toolbox. Just as if only one tool was used to build a house, the house would never get built; if only one tool is used to pursue person-centered planning, desired consumer outcomes will not be attained.

A related issue pertains to the involvement of consumers and family members in the planning process. When consumers and their families are brought together and asked to share their dreams, they may do so with much hesitation and fear. Sharing personal dreams and fears can evoke feelings of vulnerability among consumers and

family members. Hence, when agencies ask people to share their dreams, hopes and fears, responsible agency personnel *must* assume responsibility for committing the resources needed to realize the dreams. Although the necessary resources are often of a financial nature, equally important resources include staff time, supervisory skills and effort to support and/or correct staff performance, and administrative commitment to explore and address policy barriers.

In short, person-centered assessment and planning activities only begin the process of an agency adopting a person-centered way of doing business. The activities must occur in conjunction with sustained implementation of an outcome management approach focusing on person-centered consumer outcomes to ensure that staff and agencies perform those duties and functions necessary for successful implementation of each consumer's individual plan.

Person-Centered Plans are Created for So Many People that Staff and Systems Are Overwhelmed

As just described, when agencies first embrace person-centered planning approaches, agency staff often are very excited about the new ways of thinking. Such excitement can lead to attempts to try to do everything for all consumers associated with the agency, and to do everything immediately. Rarely can such an approach be successfully implemented and maintained. Agency personnel soon feel overwhelmed with what they are trying to accomplish and begin to realize that their new tasks are not workable. Consequently, agencies become disillusioned with person-centered planning as a whole.

To avoid assuming new roles and duties that are unworkable due to the sheer amount of work that would be required to fully implement person-centered plans for all of an agency's consumer population, agencies should first begin their conversion to a person-centered way of doing business through the pilot process as described in this and earlier chapters. Carefully defined pilot efforts followed by systematically planned expansion to the entire target population will help reduce the workload and accompanying stress on both staff and systems. The latter approach is much more likely to result in attainment of desired consumer and agency outcomes, and is also much more likely to lead to satisfaction among agency staff with person-centered planning.

Agencies Try to Systematize or Mandate Person-Centered Planning Approaches

It is a common reaction for agencies to seek to systematize person-centered planning values and activities. Most human service agencies historically have been characterized by mandated, systems-centered means of doing business. However, attempting to systematize and mandate person-centered planning activities actually contradicts the essence of person-centered planning. To be successful, person-centered planning must occur one consumer at a time.

Attempts to systematize or mandate person-centered planning approaches invariably diminish the power of this means of supporting people with disabilities in leading personally desired and valued lifestyles. Once again, use of a pilot project with a defined but flexible framework centered around each individual consumer that is carefully monitored and supported by agency management will enable agencies and communities to sustain and expand successful activities beyond a small group to the agency's entire consumer population.

Agencies Fail to Learn from Pilot Efforts

Agency administrators or steering committees must be cautioned against viewing pilot projects as ends in and of themselves. Instead, agencies and communities must use monitoring data from the pilot project to sustain and expand what works while simultaneously addressing and changing what does not work. It is only in this way that agencies will recognize the essentially limitless growth of person-centered activities as the agencies move along the continuum from systems-centered to person-centered, and observe the valued changes in the lives of every consumer associated with each agency.

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Appendix

Agency Self-Assessment of Person-Centered Policies and Procedures Instrument

Agency Self-Assessment of Person-Centered Policies and Procedures Instrument

INTRODUCTION

For many agencies, the shift from a systems-centered way of doing business to a more person-centered one is fraught with fear and uncertainty. We have learned and been reinforced toward a more systems-centered mind set for a very long time. In addition, a person-centered way of doing business raises many questions and concerns about policies and procedures.

To assist in making this shift, most agencies will benefit from viewing the totality of their policies and procedures as fitting somewhere along a continuum. In other words, a given policy or procedure may be viewed as more or less systems-centered or person-centered and the totality of the agency's policies and procedures will also fall somewhere along this continuum. All agencies undergo change; the challenge is to manage the change in such a way that the agency's policies and procedures move toward the person-centered end of the continuum.

Systems-centered _←————————→_ Person-centered

Thus, an agency committed to making this type of shift has two tasks. First, to self-assess where its policies and procedures fall along the continuum and second, to determine what specific policies and procedures the agency wants to change.

The Agency Self-Assessment of Person-Centered Policies and Procedures Instrument was developed to assist agencies in initiating discussion and determining the extent to which the totality of their policies and procedures reflects a person-centered way of doing business. The instrument may also be used by agencies to identify

specific policies and procedures that need to be changed in order to be more person-centered.

The instrument is divided into four sections: 1) Policies and Procedures for First Encounters with Consumers (Referral and Intake); 2) Policies and Procedures for Getting to Know Consumers (Assessment and Evaluation); 3) Policies and Procedures for Developing Person-Centered Service Plans (Goals, Objectives, and Intervention Strategies); and 4) Policies and Procedures for Supporting Consumers' Dreams (Implementing Service Plans).

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: As a team or individually, rate your agency on each policy or procedure. Circle 1, 2, or 3.

Step 2: Decide whether or not you would like your agency to engage in each procedure more often or with a higher level of quality. Record "yes" or "no".

Step 3: Prioritize the changes that you would like to make. Rank changes from 1 – 3, with 1 representing the highest priority.

Step 4: As a team, develop a team action plan specifying desired outcomes to be achieved from the prioritized changes and the steps necessary to attain these outcomes.

Section #1 Policies and Procedures for First Encounters with Consumers
(Referral and Intake) -

Policies and Procedures	Never	Sometimes	Always	Change Needed?	Priority
1. Do we offer potential consumers/families culturally-sensitive written or verbal information that adequately describes the services provided by our agency?	1	2	3		
2. Do we have a consumer/family outreach initiative that targets underserved populations?	1	2	3		
3. Do we have a designated person available to talk with potential consumers/families at the time of referral instead of just taking down telephone numbers?	1	2	3		
4. Do we respond to the inquiries of all consumers/families in a timely manner?	1	2	3		
5. Do we ask consumers/families what they want and need before telling them what services the agency provides?	1	2	3		
6. Do we refrain from asking consumers/families to complete application forms until after an initial face-to-face interview?	1	2	3		
7. Do we use the initial meeting as an opportunity for staff to complete application forms with consumers/families?	1	2	3		
8. Are application, notices and other intake materials available in languages other than English?	1	2	3		
9. Are bilingual volunteers/staff and American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters available to assist with the intake process?	1	2	3		
10. Are application forms written using person-centered language (i.e., do they request information on strengths, preferences, support needs, dreams, fears)?	1	2	3		

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Section #2 Policies and Procedures for Getting to Know Consumers
(Assessment and Evaluation)

Policies and Procedures	Never	Sometimes	Always	Change Needed?	Priority
1. Do consumers/families assist in the identification of areas in need of assessment and/or in the identification of ways to gather assessment information?	1	2	3		
2. Do consumers/families assist in the identification of people who can contribute useful and important information about the consumer?	1	2	3		
3. Do we invite people who know the consumer well to come to one or more meetings to discuss the consumer's strengths, preferences, support needs, dreams, and fears?	1	2	3		
4. Do we hold assessment meetings in places and at times that are convenient and comfortable for the consumer/family?	1	2	3		
5. Do we ask consumers/families what questions they would like answered by the assessment process?	1	2	3		
6. Are assessment tools written and presented in a culturally-sensitive and disability-sensitive manner (e.g., large print, Braille, non-English; sensitive to customs, roles, and expectations of different cultures)?	1	2	3		
7. Are assessment tools written using person-centered language (i.e., do they request information on strengths, preferences, support needs, dreams, fears)?	1	2	3		
8. Are assessment data summarized in reports that are both person-centered and culturally-sensitive?	1	2	3		
9. Are these reports shared with consumers/families and are they given an opportunity to ask questions and discuss findings?	1	2	3		

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Section #3 Policies and Procedures for Developing Person-Centered Plans
(Goals, Objectives, and Intervention Strategies)

Policies and Procedures	Never	Sometimes	Always	Change Needed?	Priority
1. Do we assist consumers/families in identifying/inviting people to attend meetings to develop/update service plans?	1	2	3		
2. Do we hold planning meetings in places and at times that are convenient/comfortable for the consumer/family?	1	2	3		
3. Do we open meetings by asking consumers/families what dreams, hopes, and fears they would like addressed in the service plan?	1	2	3		
4. Do our service planning forms include a section for writing a future vision or dream statement?	1	2	3		
5. Are service planning forms written/presented in a culturally/disability-sensitive manner (e.g., large print, Braille, non-English; sensitive to customs, roles, and expectations of different cultures)?	1	2	3		
6. Do we actively seek information and incorporate information on community/family behaviors, customs, and expectations within consumers' service plans?	1	2	3		
7. Are service planning forms written using person-centered language (i.e., do they request information on strengths, preferences, support needs, dreams, fears)?	1	2	3		
8. Are discussions around goals, objectives, and interventions conducted in ways that are both person-centered/culturally-sensitive?	1	2	3		
9. Do we work together as a team to develop the the service plan during – not before or after – the meeting?	1	2	3		
10. Are service plans shared with consumers/families and updated as necessary to reflect changes? Are they given an opportunity to ask questions/discuss findings?	1	2	3		

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Section #4 Policies and Procedures for Supporting Consumers' Dreams
(Implementing Service Plans)

Policies and Procedures	Never	Sometimes	Always	Change Needed?	Priority
1. Do we use consumers' service plans to assist us in maintaining/expanding/improving our agency's services and supports (i.e., is there a direct relationship between the dreams and preferences articulated by our consumers/families and the services/supports we provide)?	1	2	3		
2. Do we offer all services/supports identified in all our consumers' service plans? Or do we refer/follow-up referrals to other agencies when service gaps are identified?	1	2	3		
3. Are consumers/families active members of our agency's board/advisory committee?	1	2	3		
4. Are consumers/families included in inservice training opportunities?	1	2	3		
5. Do we ensure that consumers/families have ready and direct access to support team members (e.g., convenient times/locations)?	1	2	3		
6. Do we ensure that all communications between consumers/family and agency staff are positive/respectful of the consumer's dreams and preferences?	1	2	3		
7. Do we actively monitor service plans to ensure that information on community/family behaviors, customs, and expectations is incorporated within service plans?	1	2	3		
8. Do we review our agency's mission statement, strategic plan, policies and practices on a regular basis to ensure that person-centered and culturally-sensitive values are addressed?	1	2	3		
9. Do we use person-centered data from our service plans to identify changes in staffing, transportation, funding, assessment, or other areas?	1	2	3		

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